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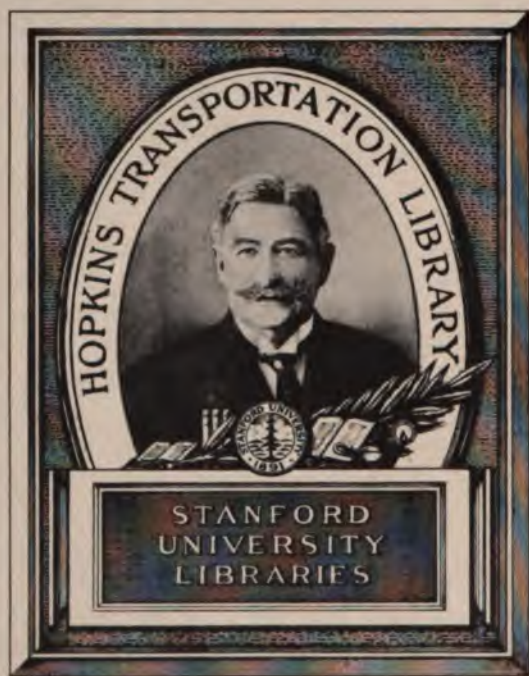
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# MINISCENCES OF THE OLD NAVY

*EDGAR STANTON MACLAY*



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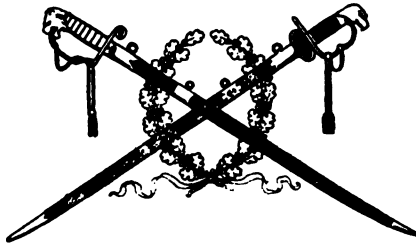
# REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD NAVY

FROM THE JOURNALS AND PRIVATE PAPERS OF  
CAPTAIN EDWARD TRENCHARD, AND REAR-  
ADMIRAL STEPHEN DECATUR TRENCHARD

BY

EDGAR STANTON MACLAY

AUTHOR OF "A HISTORY OF THE UNITED  
STATES NAVY," ETC.



G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS  
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To  
ALFRED THAYER MAHAN, U.S.N. (RETIRED)  
FOUNDER AND FIRST WRITER ON NAVAL AFFAIRS  
THIS WORK IS RESPECTFULLY  
DEDICATED  
BY THE AUTHOR



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## INTRODUCTION.

IT is seldom that the "inside history" of our navy has been so interestingly revealed as it is in the journal and private papers of the late Rear-Admiral Stephen Decatur Trenchard, and of his father, Captain Edward Trenchard. The history of the navy, as taken from the official reports of our commanders and other public documents, has been given to the country in various forms, but they, as a rule, touch only on well-known actions or errands of public service with which the general reader already is familiar. There are many acts of heroism, many thrilling episodes, and many romances wrapped up in the private lives of our officers which have not been made public, and are known only to a few of their most intimate messmates. The records left by the two Trenchards, covering eighty years of service in the United States Navy, are singularly rich in romance and in details of historic inter-

est. It is, in truth, an "inside history" of the navy for the period covered. Both the Trenchards were careful writers, and had a keen eye to matters of human interest. The journal and various notes of a cruise for the suppression of the slave trade on the coast of Africa left by the elder Trenchard are replete with stirring events, while the extensive journals of the younger Trenchard, kept while on his cruise in the China Sea, and during his remarkable career as commander of the United States cruiser *Rhode Island* in the four years of the Civil War, together with their letters and correspondence, throw a flood of light on a side of our navy's career which has been kept too much in the dark.

Although the general work of the navy during the Civil War is familiar to readers of history and current literature, yet there were important services performed by our seamen and several gallant fights and heroic episodes occurred which have not been made public. The private journal of Stephen Decatur Trenchard, kept while in command of the *Rhode Island* during the Civil War, contains accounts of several actions and many interesting incidents of that struggle that are not generally known.

This journal is singularly fortunate in being one of the extremely few continuous private narratives of the internecine strife. Nearly all of our officers during the war were frequently transferred from one ship to another, so that their impressions of the struggle are disconnected and fragmentary. The view of the naval operations of the war obtained from the private papers and journal of Rear-Admiral Trenchard may properly be described as a "bird's-eye view." During the time he was in command of the *Rhode Island*, June 10, 1861, to October, 1865, he was constantly hovering on the coast of the seceding States or making a dash in the West Indies after some blockade-runner.

From the very nature of this service Trenchard was able to obtain impressions of the struggle along the seaboard which are of peculiar interest. Probably no other officer of the navy was so widely known and became so familiar in the service as the commander of the *Little Rhody*. Among some of the notable incidents of his cruises were the spirited chase and capture of a Confederate vessel by the *Jamestown*, the capture of the British ship *Richard O'Brien*, the landing of a detachment of seamen and marines near Galveston, when

the Stars and Stripes for the first time were replanted on Texan soil by a regular United States force after the secession of that State; the adventure of a boat's crew from the *Rhode Island* after the sinking of the *Monitor*; the capture of the Confederate vessels *Venus*, and *Vixen*, and *Cronstadt*; the several chases after the supposed *Alabama*, and the active participation in both attacks on Fort Fisher. Besides these occurrences of more general interest, there are a number of instances of heroism displayed by American seamen, which places them on the plane of the historic Reuben James and other tars who have become famous in the American Navy. It is the purpose of this work to put this invaluable material in narrative form, and to give those interested in the navy an opportunity to see it as it was seen by an officer actively engaged in the service.

In the preparation of this book, I am indebted to Edward Trenchard, Esq., of New York City, who has placed at my disposal all the papers and correspondence of his father and grandfather.

E. S. M.

OLD FIELD POINT,

SETAUKET, LONG ISLAND, N. Y.,

January 31, 1898.

## REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD NAVY



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# REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD NAVY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY LIFE OF EDWARD TRENCHARD.

**B**OTH Edward Trenchard and his son, Stephen Decatur, began life with the intention of entering callings that were anything but warlike. The parents of the former fondly hoped that he would achieve fame as an artist, while the latter was to become a bishop. Each undoubtedly would have made his mark had not the pugnacious spirit of Dorsetshire asserted itself too early in their careers. The æsthetic taste of Edward, and the religious fervor of Stephen Decatur, however, were conspicuous all through their stormy careers, and form a striking feature in their writings. Ed-

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## Early Life of Edward Trenchard. 3

vette *Adams*, an English cousin of his, Colonel Gustavus Hipposly, wrote December 5, 1815, seeking a position in Uncle Sam's navy for his son ; from which it will be seen that Englishmen even at that early age were anxious to have their sons enter a service which had become famous. Trenchard replied : " Happy should I be if it were in my power to promote the wishes of yourself and your son by introducing the latter into the navy of the United States, but a recent act of Congress closes the army and navy against all foreigners who have not been naturalized, and as our naturalization laws require a residence of five years before the rights of citizenship can be acquired, I am apprehensive that this would prove an insurmountable objection with the head of the Department. On this subject, however, I have communicated freely with the Secretary of State, Mr. Adams, and from the friendly interest which he takes in the affair, the difficulty may finally be perhaps surmounted. Should this be the case, I shall most assuredly give you the earliest information, and in that event it will give me great pleasure in receiving him aboard my ship. It is not possible that he could receive any higher rank than

that of midshipman, and on his own conduct and acquirements will his subsequent promotion depend. The pay and sustenance of that class of officers in the navy of the United States is equal to \$26.50 per month, and with the allowance which you propose to continue to him would afford him a genteel support."

On his return from England with Gilbert Fox, Edward Trenchard seems to have abandoned all thoughts of becoming an artist, and on April 30, 1800, a midshipman's warrant was secured for him. He was ordered to the *Adams* for a cruise against the French in the West Indies. This vessel was then commanded by Captain Stephen Decatur, Sr., and it was this fact together with the friendship that sprang up between young Trenchard and Stephen Decatur, Jr., that led to the naming of Trenchard's son, afterward Rear-Admiral, Stephen Decatur Trenchard. After the French war the *Adams* was ordered to the Mediterranean, and participated in the engagements before Tripoli, May, 1803. In the following year Trenchard was transferred to the *Constellation* and was present at the bombardments of Tripoli, and also was in that ship when she was

fired upon by the Spanish batteries near the Straits of Gibraltar, September 21, 1805.

That the æsthetic nature of Edward Trenchard had not been blunted by the "stern realities of war," is seen in a letter dated off Tripoli, April 5, 1805, to Midshipman Turner. Like the friendship that sprang up between Decatur and Somers, a strong attachment grew up between Trenchard and Midshipman Turner. Trenchard wrote, "One winter has elapsed since I had the pleasure of seeing you, but not one particle of friendship has been nipped by its killing frost, but still remains like the hardy sailor who gains strength by braving the strongest gales that he may not lose his reckoning in the dark fogs of forgetfulness."

After the Tripolitan war, Trenchard served in the famous *Constitution* of the home squadron from 1806 to 1810, and in 1811 he was assigned to duty in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. On August 30, 1812, he began his active service in the war of 1812, being on that date ordered to Sackett's Harbor on Lake Ontario, where he was to superintend the building of the sloop of war *Madison*, constructed by Henry Eckford. He probably left New York, November 28th, in charge of one of the build-

that of midshipman, and the hazardous land and acquirements will be of great service in the future. The position of the harbor, in the class of officers in the service of the year. States is equal to the service of the year. with the allowance of the year. "Eight weeks continue to him. The timber was grown support."

On his return to the excellent disposition of the Fox, Edward Fox, and to the clear head and done all the resources of Mr. Henry Eckford." on April 1813, attained the rank of Master-Commandant. Trenchard assumed command of the for a and took part in the naval operations India and Ontario. But the most formidable Canadian seamen had to contend with was the *Madison* at one time having her two hundred men on the sick. Trenchard himself was a victim of the and on July 21, 1813, left the station to cover his health. On May 15th of the following year he rejoined his ship and served to the close of the war, taking part in the engagement off Kingston, September 11, 1814. On the close of the war he commanded the *John Adams*, and took part in the operations at Algiers, Tripoli, and Tunis, which resulted creditably for the United States.





## CHAPTER II.

### ON THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

IT would be difficult to exaggerate the value of the services performed by our war-ships in the suppression of the slave trade on the western coast of Africa early in the century, and it would be equally difficult to over-estimate the hardships and privations to which our officers and crews were subjected in this hazardous service. Many of the slavers were heavily armed and manned by unusually large crews, and, as it was shown on more than one occasion, they were prepared to fight. In fact, some of these craft turned from piracy to the slave trade, and vice versa, as circumstances directed, and were quite as dangerous to the unarmed merchantman as to the negroes.

An example of the audacity of these traders is well demonstrated in the following anecdote



dote : A trading vessel on this coast showing American colors had aroused the suspicions of the commander of the British gunboat *Contest*. The English refrained from making a search of the trader, contenting themselves with keeping close by her. Day after day the vessels sailed in company until the Yankee skipper finding that he could not ship his cargo of slaves—for in truth he was a slave-trader—challenged the British commander to a friendly sailing match to last twenty-four hours. The challenge was accepted, but under cover of night, when the cruiser had been allowed to get far enough ahead to be out of sight, the trader ran in-shore, took on a cargo of slaves and before daylight was fairly started on her homeward voyage. In the effort to suppress the slave trade, the United States early in the century established a squadron on the west coast of Africa, and soon after the war of 1812 and the difficulty in the Mediterranean had been settled, turned its attention to this quarter.

One of the first of our cruisers to be sent over was the 20-gun sloop-of-war *Cyane*, the vessel that had been captured under such glorious circumstances from the British in 1815

off this same coast of Africa, by Capt. Charles Stewart. There was just a touch of pride noticeable on the part of the government in selecting this cruiser for such service. When the war of 1812 broke out the English were loud in their boasting that in six months "the contemptible flag of the United States would be swept from the ocean," that our "arsenals would be reduced to a heap of ruins," and that "British war-ships would have no difficulty in capturing the largest of the American cruisers." At the same time British agents assured the several potentates of Barbary that hereafter Great Britain would not permit the too forward Americans to build any war-ship heavier than a frigate.

The appearance in the Mediterranean of our magnificent ships-of-line at Gibraltar shortly after the war closed caused deep humiliation to our cousins, and made them the butt of ridicule long after the war, while their cup of mortification was filled to overflowing by the appearance of their own war-ships, captured from them in battle, serenely sailing around England's greatest fortress with the Stars and Stripes at the gaff. The presence of these vessels led to many bitter quarrels between

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... scene of her capture  
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... in company with British  
... in suppressing the slave

... was placed in command  
... war and early in 1820 he ap-  
... the fever-torn coast of Africa, and  
... monotonous and irksome search for  
... Frenchem had the good fortune to  
... unusually able set of officers to assist  
... nearly all of whom attained distinction  
... in life. Among them were Matthew  
... Morraith Perry, the hero of the naval opera-  
... tions in the Mexican Gulf; Silas H. Stringham,  
... who had the great distinction of capturing the  
... forts at Veracruz; and early in the civil war;  
... William ... who served with great credit  
... on the coast of California in the Mexican war,  
... and who ... the Gulf Squadron early  
... in the ... John D. Montgomery, and  
... William ...

... had not long been on the station

when she made one of the most important captures on that coast. It occurred while the ship was near the mouth of the River Gallinos, April 10, 1820. Captain Trenchard had reason to believe that he would find some slave-traders at this point, and with a view of taking them by surprise he approached the river under cover of night and lay to until morning. His surmises proved to be correct for when day broke he discovered two brigs and five schooners at anchor close in shore, and almost within reach of his guns. The people in these vessels, excepting those in one of the brigs and in one of the schooners, made out the *Cyane* almost as soon as they were seen by the Americans, and instantly made sail to escape, for the massive spars and heavy rigging of the cruiser, told them plainly enough that they were in the presence of an enemy. The *Cyane* was quickly in pursuit, and for a few minutes there was the liveliest kind of bustle and confusion in the efforts to spread all the canvas that would draw.

It was no child's play that the Americans were engaged in when they undertook to come up with these strangers, for, as has just been said, many of the slavers were heavily armed,



and should the seven of them unite in an attack upon the little *Cyane*, they might succeed in capturing or destroying her. But Trenchard knew only one duty, and that was to fight when he had an enemy in reach, and away went his ship in full chase. There was a fresh breeze blowing at the time and all the vessels were bowling along at a smart rate, heeling over under clouds of canvas on the port tack. Trenchard exhibited great skill and forethought in approaching the strangers. He took advantage of the formation of the land so that the fleeing craft could sail only in one direction, thereby preventing them from scattering, and enabling the *Cyane* to come up with all of them.

After the chase had lasted about an hour the *Cyane*, at 7 A.M., tacked, having the schooners well in shore of her, where there was little chance of escaping. By this time the wind had fallen and Captain Trenchard got his launch, first cutter, and starboard quarter-boat out with the intention of carrying the vessels by boarding. The boats were fully manned and dashed at the schooners in gallant style. At 8 A.M. the first cutter took possession of the nearest vessel without op-

position. She proved to be the American schooner *Endymion*, commanded by Capt. Alexander McKim Andrew. The commander of this vessel had been observed to leave his ship and pull toward the shore, evidently with a view of escaping. Noticing this, Trenchard ordered the quarter-boat to make for the fugitive. After an exciting race the boat was overhauled and her people, including Mr. Andrew, were secured. Midshipman H. C. Newton was sent aboard the *Endymion* with a prize crew to take charge.

Meantime the launch and the first cutter had returned to the *Cyane* as it was found that the breeze was sufficiently strong to enable the chase to hold her distance. The sloop of war then resumed the pursuit. At 8.30 A.M., the *Endymion* picked up the quarter-boat with Lieutenant Montgomery and followed the *Cyane*. From 8 A.M. to noon the breeze gradually died out, when Trenchard sent the first cutter commanded by Lieutenant Stringham, the launch Lieutenant Voorhees, and the second gig, Lieutenant Mervine, in chase, while the *Cyane* followed as closely as the failing breeze would allow. This time the boats succeeded in getting alongside the chase, and took posses-

sion of the brig *Annita*, commanded by Pedro Pushe ; the schooner *Esperanza*, Lewis Mumford ; the schooner *Dasher*, Thomas Munro ; the schooner *Eliza*, Constant Hastings ; and the schooner *Louise*, Francis Sablon. Lieutenants Perry, Stringham, Mervine, Montgomery, and Sailing-master Hudson, were promptly ordered to make a survey of these vessels, and to determine their real character. Captain Trenchard notes, " Put on board the *Endymion* Midshipman H. C. Newton ; the *Esperanza*, Lieutenant Stringham ; the *Louise*, Midshipman Hosack ; the *Dasher*, Acting Master's Mate, Jacob Morris ; the *Eliza*, Midshipman Sanderson." As soon as these officers and their prize crews had been placed aboard their several charges, Captain Trenchard tacked and stood back for Gallinos, to attend to the two strangers who had not joined in the fight, but had remained quietly at their anchors in dignified composure, as if not troubled with a guilty conscience. These two vessels were found to be the *Science*, or *Dechosa*, and the *Plattsburg*. Captain Trenchard determined to investigate their character.

Meantime the vessels first captured, were reported upon by the officers detailed to search

them as follows :—"In conformity with your order we have carefully examined the American schooner *Endymion*, commanded by Alexander McKim Andrew, and upon a close scrutiny we are of opinion that the sole object of her being in this place is the procuring of slaves ; indeed we have good evidence that she has her cargo of slaves nearly completed, and that they are now confined in irons at a town near the river called Seymoeboe. She is completely fitted, for the accommodation of slaves, has on board several thousand gallons of water, and a very large quantity of rice, the common food of negroes. She is owned, per register, by a Mr. William P. Strike of Baltimore, is under American colors, and is evidently acting in contravention to the laws of the United States. We have also examined the other vessels embraced in your order, and find that they are all deeply engaged in the traffic of slaves. There is but one, however, of those under foreign flags that we can ascertain as acting in contravention to the above law. This is the schooner *Esperanza* (formerly the U. S. revenue cutter *Alert*) now under Spanish colors. She sailed last from Charleston, S. C., without a clearance, at which place she enlisted the major part of her



crew of American citizens. Her apparent captain is a Spaniard by the name of Mumford, but her real captain and probable owner is a Mr. Ratcliffe, an American, and who is now on shore collecting his complement of negroes."

The search of the *Dechosa* and *Plattsburg* result as follows: "In compliance with your order we have examined the schooner *Dechosa* and *Maria Gathreust* or *Plattsburg* detained by this ship on suspicion of acting in contravention to the laws of the United States. After a close investigation, we find that the *Dechosa*, or *Science*, of New York, is owned by E. Mallebran of New York; sailed from that port in January last, and touched at Porto Rico, where she changed her name, and came immediately to this coast, landed her cargo, and made arrangements for receiving her slaves. There is little doubt of her being American property, and consequently we are of opinion that she is violating the laws of the United States. We can only learn that the *Maria Gathreust*, or *Plattsburg*, of Baltimore sailed from Baltimore in December last where she shipped her crew and cargo of goods; she touched at Cuba, at which place she changed her character, and proceeded to this coast in

quest of slaves. The number of her men and her strong armament induces us to believe that she is not only a vessel engaged in the traffic of slaves, but she is fully prepared to commit piratical aggressions on the flag of any nation." Thus it will be seen that Captain Trenchard by this capture secured six slavers, and possibly one pirate. The blow was a severe one to the slave trade, and did much toward checking the traffic on this part of the coast. The officers and crew of the captured vessels were sent to the United States in the *Eliza*.

While on this coast Captain Trenchard made it a point to treat all the English officers with special courtesy, with the result that in spite of her name the *Cyane* became one of the most popular vessels on the station. Her officers frequently exchanged visits with those of British cruisers, and many a messroom rang with the praises of the *Cyane* and her gallant officers. To add to the attractive features of this cruiser there was a small band of musicians aboard who played regularly once a day for practice, and also on all festive occasions. It is probable that marine bands at that time, especially those in small cruisers, had not attained the high degree of excellence of the

modern band. The musicians of the high seas in those days did not occupy the important position they hold to-day in first-class cruisers, and the few lone and lorn manipulators of wind and brass in the *Cyane*, in all probability would have made a poor showing in the highly cultivated musical ear of the modern Jack Tar. In fact, musicians at that time were regarded with condescending contempt by the hardy sailors, as being, perhaps, good enough to tickle the ear with their tingling notes, or to twitch a few muscles of the limbs into a jiggling mood in fair weather ; but when it came to real work, and an enemy was to be fought, they were fit only to be stowed away in a cable tier. But however that may be, the Jack Tar of that day had not the high musical mind of his descendants of to-day, and he undoubtedly tolerated the tingling brass, and the wheezy wood, with his usual good-natured indifference.

The natives on the coast, however, were immensely impressed with the *Cyane's* band. To hear it was one of the events on the West African coast, and its fame even extended to the islands of the sea, as the following incident will show : On May 19th, the *Cyane* put into Port Praya, after a cruise in search of slavers.

The fame of her band had preceded her, for scarcely had she dropped anchor, when a messenger came aboard with the announcement, that : " His Excellency, the Governor General, solicits the pleasure of Captain Trenchard's company, with that of all the officers of the *Cyane*, to tea this evening, and would be highly gratified with having a few tunes from Captain Trenchard's band, which he solicits may be permitted to come on shore with their musical instruments, as the evening will be rendered delightful and pleasant by a full moon." This enchanting invitation to tea and a full moon was sent through one Hodges, an English-speaking person on the island, and the above is as near a literal interpretation as can be given.

Captain Trenchard complied with the request and attended the Governor. After a decent amount of time had been allowed the American officers for the contemplation of the tea and the full moon, the natives were treated to, what was to them, the awe-inspiring sounds from the *Cyane's* band. With forethought, bred by experience, the band-master labelled in advance the tunes that he was about to render, so that the audience would have no difficulty in knowing what melody they were



feasting upon. So affected were the natives by this revelation of sound, that the Governor straightway, on the following Sunday, before the moon had again recovered her position in the heavens after her fullness, invited Captain Trenchard and Lieutenant Mervine "and any of the officers that can be spared from the ship" to dinner—and of course the band had to be exhibited again.

It was while at this port that Captain Trenchard showed his keen jealousy of the honor and dignity of the Stars and Stripes. When entering the port he saluted the local flag, according to custom, with seventeen guns. The shore batteries replied with only fifteen. Captain Trenchard promptly sent Lieutenant Voorhees ashore to demand an explanation. The Governor threw the blame upon the narrow shoulders of his unfortunate hirelings, and making profuse apologies, he caused the two additional guns to be fired—several hours after the fifteen had been given. The cold facts in the case seem to have been, that the fort ran short of powder on the fifteenth discharge, and the poor under-fed officials of His Excellency's Guard had to do some "of the tallest kind of hustling" around the town to scare up the two extra charges.

During the time of his cruise on this station, Captain Trenchard visited all the important points in the vicinity, including Madeira, Cape de Verde, Senegal River, and Shebro. While at the last-named place, March 27th, the Governor, a Mr. McCarthy, (it is needless to add that he was not a native) with his suite, accompanied by the Rev. Sam. Bacon, the United States agent for the colony, came on board the *Cyane* and dined—the only “square meal,” so one of the *Cyane's* tars declared, the distinguished guests had enjoyed in some months. In honor of the occasion Captain Trenchard manned his yard and fired a salute of fifteen guns.

In a letter, dated October 2, 1820, to his wife, Captain Trenchard said: “Since my return from Funchal, Madeira, I ran down toward Cape de Verde, and off the Senegal in the track of the slave vessels which visit that part of the coast more frequently than formerly. We had been cruising for twenty days, during which time we fell in with a number of European vessels, but not with any belonging to the United States, or appearing to be fitted out for the slave trade. On the 17th ult., I touched at Grand Port, Island of St. Vincent, where I found H.

B. M. sloop of war, *Myrmadon*, Captain Leeke, who informed me that Captain Reed, of the United States' ship *Hornet*, had taken a brig at Buena Vista, which he had sent home as a prize. On my arrival here I found a letter from Captain Wadsworth, of the United States' ship *John Adams*, which I am informed has instructions for me from the Navy Department, and that we are ordered to the United States. He also mentions that he shall cruise from the River Congo to Cape Mount, as the climate appears to affect him. I am now extremely anxious to obtain my instructions, and shall sail immediately in quest of Captain Wadsworth."

Captain Trenchard had good reason for being "extremely anxious" to hear from the Department, for his men were wasted with fever, notwithstanding his efforts to keep them in health. With a view of saving them as much as possible, he employed native Krumen at Sierra Leone to bring aboard such provisions as the ship needed. Each Kruman was paid at the rate of \$1.25 a week, and in making out the pay-roll, the American Jack Tar showed his ever present sense of humor. The names of these savages were unintelligible to the Yankee

ear, but Jack was equal to the emergency and dubbed the dusky fellows with such imposing titles, as "John Thomas Wilkins Chew Tobacco," "Pot of Beer," "Sam Coffee," "Three Fathoms," "Half a Dollar," "Little Tom," "Jack Purser," and "Centipede"—the last probably being suggested by the expansive feet of the man so named. Sublimely unconscious of the significance of these names, the innocent savages, impressed by the new long-drawn titles, seemed immensely pleased with them, and not a few adopted them permanently as cognomens, which were handed down from generation to generation.

The fever, however, continued to make sad inroads in the *Cyane's* crew, in spite of all precautions. All white people visiting the coast were more or less affected. In eight months the English brig *Snapper* lost eleven officers and twenty men out of a crew of over fifty all told. On April 20th, Captain Trenchard reported to the Secretary of the Navy, thirty-six of his men on the sick-list. It was in response to this alarming report that the *Cyane* was ordered home, and her place was taken by the *Hornet*.

Returning to the United States, Captain



Trenchard was assigned to duty in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, but his health had been completely broken down, and in 1824 he died, having seen eighteen years of sea service, out of a total of twenty-four.





### CHAPTER III.

#### CONFESSIONS OF A MIDSHIPMAN.

STEPHEN DECATUR TRENCHARD, like his father, began life with the intention of entering a far more peaceful calling than that of war. At the age of eleven, he attended a collegiate school at Gambier, Ohio, conducted by the celebrated Bishop Chase, with the intention of preparing for the ministry. But the embryo bishop, with his dreams of puffed sleeves and a shepherd's crook, was diverted from the path of peace and good will toward men, to the cruel profession of war. He had inherited a decided liking for the sea, not only from his father, but from his mother, the daughter of the Hon. Joshua Sands, the father of Joshua Sands, who afterward attained a high rank in the navy. But aside from this inherited taste, young Trenchard bore one of

the proudest names in American naval history, having been named Stephen Decatur Trenchard by his father, in consideration of the latter's life-long friendship not only with the younger but with the elder Stephen Decatur.

With such a preponderance of circumstances urging him to the sea, it was not strange that the youth abandoned all thoughts of entering the ministry, and began his highly creditable career in the navy. His training under the care of the venerable bishop, however, made a lasting impression on his mind, and all through life he shows in his letters and journal, a strong religious bent. Sunday, always, was a sacred day with him. In the four years he commanded the *Rhode Island*, he held service with uniform regularity, much to the disgust of some of the wicked tars who preferred to lounge away the time reading cheap literature, or teasing the ship's cat. It has been estimated that during the time he commanded this vessel, Trenchard failed to hold service on Sunday only twice, and then only because the weather made church service out of the question. In fact, before the close of the war, the *Rhode Island* became widely known as the "Gospel gun-boat." Trenchard never lost

an opportunity of attending service in some church in the port where his ship happened to be, and he usually made a note of the clergyman's name, and gave the text with references, concluding with some such comment as, "Felt greatly benefitted by the discourse"; "My heart goes out in gratitude to the Giver of all things, for the privilege of again attending service in the house of God." There are only a few cases where Trenchard failed to make these comments on the clergyman or sermon, from which it is to be inferred that on those occasions, one or both were so wretchedly inferior that the less said the better.

One of the greatest discomforts to which budding naval heroes were exposed in the early days, was not so much the perils of the sea, or the desire to "throw up his commission," as the ordeal of hazing, which the more experienced young gentlemen of the steerage inflicted upon the greenhorn with unfailing regularity, and with amazing ingenuity and variety—and there is reason to suspect that the custom has not been allowed to die out with the youthful Farraguts of to-day. Young Trenchard, in spite of his glorious "front name" and tender years, undoubtedly would

have been compelled to drink this initiatory cup of naval greatness to the dregs, had it not been for the personal interest his commander, Captain John Downes, took in him. Instead of being exposed to the tender mercies of the young gentlemen of the steerage, Trenchard was taken to the Captain's cabin, where he could peek out from under the wing of the autocrat of the ship, and bid defiance to the mischief-loving junior officers. But even this is not saying that he escaped the ordeal entirely; the chances being that the not overworked gentlemen of the steerage soon found some means of getting at the young chick of a middy, in spite of the protecting feathers of the captain.

In those days there was no method of keeping the steerage warm in cold weather, except by heating a hot shot, and placing it in a bucket of sand. Around such makeshift stoves, the young officers would gather on cold winter nights. The bucket necessarily being small, and the feet of the officers taking some room—not that they were unduly large, but that they did take up some space—they naturally huddled very closely together. This, of course, brought their heads into proximity, and under the benign influence of the contact and the hot

shot, it would not be strange if their ingenuity did not speedily devise some way of circumventing the captain of the ship, and getting at his protégé.

It was not until October, 1834, that Stephen Decatur Trenchard hatched out into a full-feathered midshipman, and his letter shows that he was afflicted with all the ailments of newly-acquired rank. He actually had received a personal letter from no less a personage than the great Secretary of the United States, with a real signature of that wonderful official, and the seal of that Department. The fact that the letter was written by some \$12-a-week-clerk of the department, and probably was never even glanced at by the Secretary, made no difference to the youthful midshipman.

The letter-head was that of Uncle Sam's great Secretary, and it undoubtedly was addressed to this identical Stephen Decatur Trenchard. He was sure of this point, for he slept with it under his pillow, and frequently got up at night to read it all over again, and to comment on every splash of ink, and every disfigurement that spoiled the handsome sheet of white paper.

But the contents of that paper were the cap-



ping climax of young Trenchard's delirium of ecstasy. After saying that he was "hereby" and "duly" placed on probation for the rank of midshipman, the youngster was appalled with the thought that perhaps the eye of the great Secretary had been following him night and day with tireless watchfulness, noting his every move in sleep or wakefulness, and that only after the most careful weighing of his qualification in a supposititious apothecary's scale, had the great Secretary of the United States decided that Trenchard was fit to be a candidate for midshipman. After reading this letter for the twenty-second time, the youthful Trenchard got control of his bobbing eyes sufficiently to make out these important words: "If your commanding officer shall, after six months of actual service at sea, report favorably of your character, talent, and qualifications, a warrant will be given to you bearing the date of this letter. I enclose a description of the uniform, and the requisite oath; the latter when taken and subscribed you will transmit to the Department, with your letter of acceptance, in which you will state your age and place of nativity." This was the section that so perturbed the modest nature of young Trenchard.



"Your letter of acceptance!" *Mirabile dictu.*  
 "Accept! Well, I don't think not," or whatever  
 was the favorite slang of the day; and forthwith  
 the youngster began to assume airs of importance,  
 which even the terrors of steerage hazing  
 could not altogether suppress.

The description of the midshipman's uniform  
 sent by the great Secretary, also, was peculiarly  
 calculated to cause the stripling of a midship-  
 man to feel elated. Short of stature, even for  
 his age, and with a chunky little neck, it is no  
 wonder that he walked about the deck with his  
 head thrown back, his chin alarmingly elevated,  
 and presenting an abnormally stuck-up appear-  
 ance generally, because the regulations (cruelly  
 unmindful of the fact that a mere boy might  
 be called upon to wear the uniform) demanded  
 a stiff collar with an oak-leaf and a large anchor  
 embroidered upon it. The collar was not to  
 be one jot or tittle less than three and a half  
 inches high, amply sufficient to get several  
 large anchors upon it, and it being Trenchard's  
 first official uniform, there is every reason to  
 believe that he insisted on good measurement  
 —regardless of the fact that such a collar  
 would have an unfailing tendency to saw his  
 short neck off close under the ears.

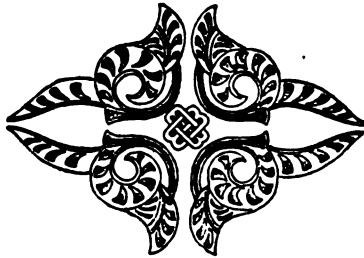
Returning from his probationary cruise in the Mediterranean, in the historic *Constitution* (in which it may safely be conjectured that young Trenchard's conduct was the very pink of nautical excellence) he received his warrant as midshipman, July 6, 1834, and was ordered to the receiving ship *Concord*, at Portsmouth. Lieutenant McIntosh, afterward captain in the Confederate service, had the distinguished honor of handing the midshipman's warrant to him. He said: "I have great pleasure to enclose your warrant as midshipman. I congratulate you upon being permanently attached to the navy, and as the Department has favored your claim, I trust you will continue to meet the approbation of those with whom you may be associated." By this time young Trenchard's poor neck had become calloused sufficiently to be reconciled to the enormous collar, so that the placing of a star of the first magnitude on the collar, the insignia of midshipman's rank, in place of the atrocious anchor did not so seriously inconvenience him or cause him to hold his head higher than was necessary.

During the war with the southern Indians Trenchard cruised in the West Indies, and on

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the coast of Florida, under Commander Hiram Paulding of the Battle of Lake Champlain fame. Trenchard took passage in the *Levant* from Pensacola to New York, also under Paulding, the latter noting, "During the time he (Trenchard) was aboard his conduct was unexceptionable."

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## CHAPTER IV.

### JOLLY MIDSHIPMITES.

**B**EFORE the Naval Academy was established at Annapolis, 1845, our officers were compelled to pass an examination before a Board of Examiners at the Naval Asylum and Hospital in Philadelphia. Trenchard with his usual conscientiousness had long been preparing for this ordeal, and on returning from his Mediterranean cruise in 1840, he attended the school in Philadelphia. Here he came in contact with many of the aged Jack Tars from whom the aspiring officers learned many a lesson in seamanship and the proper reverence for officers. Being in a great city—as Philadelphia was then considered—these young officers attending the naval school found it necessary to dress a little more stylishly than they had been accustomed to do aboard ship.

They frequently appeared in public on the "promenade" or at "parties" and it was considered good taste for them to have a full suit of civilian's clothes. But here a difficulty arose. The pay of a midshipman was extremely small, and after furnishing their own uniforms, and meeting other expenses incident to the service, they found difficulty in supplying themselves with a civilian's outfit.

The ingenuity of the American naval officer, however, is proverbial, and it is never shown to better advantage than in the face of difficulties. The young midshipmen of the Philadelphia Naval School, soon hit upon the device of establishing a "class wardrobe." As it was impossible for each and every one of them to purchase a complete outfit, it was agreed upon by the members of the class, that one should buy a coat, another a hat, another a waistcoat, another a pair of trousers, another a pair of shoes, and so on throughout the whole paraphernalia of the stylish dress of that day. When not in use these articles of clothing were carefully hung in the class wardrobe, and in this way an extensive collection of pants, shoes, coats, hats, and vests accumulated.

When any of the midshipmen desired to at-



tend the "promenade," or a party where civilian costume was "the thing," he was privileged to visit the class wardrobe, and fit himself out as best he could with the common property. Of course, the attempt was made to keep an equal supply of pants, coats, and vests, etc., and also to have such a variety of sizes as to accommodate as many different figures as the class contained. The plan worked tolerably well, although there were some cases of misfits. Complaints were made from young officers having long waists and short legs; but they managed to get along on the promenade, by taking a cleverly concealed reef in their trousers. Those who were inclined to obesity submitted to the slender waistcoats with charmingly good grace, by enduring for the time they were on parade the tortures of tight lacing. Those who were flat-chested cheerfully filled the gap with padding, while those who had to crowd No. 8 feet into No. 6 shoes, submitted to the ordeal with astonishing fortitude.

So, taking it all in all, the class wardrobe was a great success. The only emergency the ingenious young midshipmen could not meet, was when there happened to be an unusually heavy and simultaneous demand on the cloth-

ing. This occurred when some kind-hearted hostess with charming daughters was to give a "formal" at which civilian costume was to be the rule of the evening. Then the trouble began ; for in spite of all their rules and regulations about buying the various articles of civilian costume, it would happen that there would be more coats than waistcoats, or more boots than pants, which resulted in the painful alternative of some of the midshipmen not going to the joyous occasion at all, or appearing on the ball-room floor in pants and waistcoat, without the coat, or in coat and waistcoat without the pants—either of which, of course, could not be thought of for a moment, for no matter how immaculate was the polish on the shoe-buckles, the deficiencies in the suit were sure to be noticed—even in Philadelphia. So the unfortunate ones had to stay in the barracks, sucking their thumbs, waiting for their comrades to return from the fun, and tell how much they enjoyed themselves. It is said that more than one lifelong coolness between midshipmen, who afterward became Commodores and Rear Admirals, resulted from just such a little thing as this.

The love of dancing and attending parties,



developed among the younger officers under such circumstances, stood them in good need later in life. Whenever these youngsters went on a cruise they were sure to concoct some sort of a dance or entertainment in whatever port they happened. If at sea, they seized such occasions as Christmas Eve, Thanksgiving night, or Fourth of July, as a pretext for a jollification, and had the dance out among themselves over the somewhat encumbered decks of the cruisers. In such cases no ill feeling was caused by the poverty of the class wardrobe, for all appeared in their usual sea dress. Young Trenchard, in spite, of his predilection for the ministry, and intensely religious nature, became an enthusiastic devotee of Terpsichore, and his dancing, so the ladies said, was "just too lovely for anything."

This, however, did not detract from his ability as an officer, for we have it from the executive officer of the *Preble* himself, (Lieutenant Junius Boyle,) that Trenchard was one of the best passed midshipmen he had ever sailed with. As the executive officer of the warship is supposed to be in a perpetual tooth and nail fight with every object, animate or inanimate, in the ship, from the keelson to the masthead, from

the ship's goat to the captain himself, such a remark from him about one of the Junior officers may well be regarded as a compliment, as the younger officers of the present navy will freely acknowledge. It is complimentary to Trenchard to note that Farragut himself was a most nimble and graceful dancer, all of which goes to show that dancing is by no means detrimental to greatness ; so, on with the dance, and let the fight come when it will.

On leaving the naval school at Philadelphia, in 1841, Trenchard was ordered to the *Preble*, and made a cruise in the Mediterranean. In those days, this was the favored station of all navies, and the officers and men always counted on having a royal good time. And of all the ports in that sea, Port Mahon was the one where more pleasure could be extracted to the square foot than any other port within their ken. In later years, with the enormous increase in the size and draft of war vessels, Port Mahon is seldom visited, but at the time the *Preble* stopped there in 1842, it was in the zenith of its glory. The place was a sort of rendezvous, where the wives of our officers lived, while their husbands were on the station, and where the leading families were always ready to welcome

our people to their homes. Perhaps this is why Trenchard notes, "At Port Mahon a number of American ladies joined the squadron." The Mahonese were especially fond of the American officers, and that the sentiment was fully reciprocated is attested by the fact that a number of marriages took place, and some of these women are now living with their families in the United States.

The dances given at Port Mahon by the American naval officers became famous throughout the Mediterranean ports. Our Government had a regular navy agent there, and an enormous storehouse, the smooth oak floor of which, as the eagle eye of our young officers soon discovered, when polished and waxed, made an admirable place for dancing. It did not take them long to crowd all of Uncle Sam's truck into one half of the building, thus leaving a clear space admirably suited for a ball-room. This place was profusely decorated with bunting of all colors, while a number of old barrel-hoops, ingeniously arranged with groups of bayonets and evergreens, made novel, if not expensive chandeliers,—the candles being stuck on the points of the bayonets. Old Jean Cachos, the veteran caterer of Port Mahon, declared



that he got many an "inspiration" in his art from the lavish generosity of the American officers, under the influence of which he produced "symphonies" "dreams," "creations," etc., in ices and confitures that were really creditable.

At the end of every season our officers usually gave a fancy-dress ball, every one of the prominent personages in town attending. The fancy-dress ball given at the time Trenchard was there was a memorable affair. People came from far and near to attend it, and it was astonishing how many of our warships scattered in different parts of the Mediterranean, found their stores giving out just about that time, and dropped into Port Mahon to replenish—and incidentally be in good season to attend the ball.

At this affair one of the midshipmen, impersonated the "Old Boot of Chatham Street, New York." In those days, before Paddy Divvers had the name of the venerable street changed to Park Row, one of the most conspicuous monuments in the thoroughfare was an enormous wooden boot, some six feet high, which stood on the sidewalk. It belonged to an enterprising shoe-maker, and his shop be-

came well known among naval officers as the "Old Boot." The midshipman in question had ingeniously contrived a tolerably fair imitation of this boot out of barrel-hoops and canvas. Getting into it, he managed to hold it up by means of straps, the sole resting on rollers, while a couple of slight holes, cut near the top of the leg, enabled him to navigate the ball-room and steer clear of posts and wall-flowers. He did not dance in costume, although he made brave efforts to induce some fair woman to accept him—the excuse being that his foot was too large.

The most remarkable thing about this midshipman, however, and the topic that was most widely discussed, was the fact that he refused to allow his identity to become known. This became simply marvellous when refreshments were served. Wine flowed like water, and a delicious sausage, called *sobensados*, made exclusively by the Mahonese, and of which our officers were very fond (so much so that every Mahonese visiting the United States was always entreated to make the savory dish), were offered unstintedly, and without price. The fortitude of this midshipman in refusing, or rather being unable to eat or drink, was

widely commented upon and aroused the sympathies of the other guests. Finally, some of the ladies and gentlemen, purely and solely out of the fullness of their overflowing good-nature, insisted on pouring wine into the peep-holes of the boot, and then thrusting sausages into the same apertures, having a vague idea that somehow or other the drink and food might reach the self-denying prisoner within, and he could drink the wine and munch the sobensados in his calm, though somewhat heated, retreat. There seems to have been no question about the wine reaching him—although probably not in a drinkable way—but the sausages stuffed into the peep-holes completely cut off his line of vision. His hands were engaged in holding up the straps, so he endeavored to tear the sausages out with his teeth. But they were strong and resisted all his efforts to pull in or push out, so that he was compelled to heave-to under short sail and flounder around the ball-room very much like a ship without a rudder.

Young Trenchard shortly afterward was transferred from the *Preble* to the *Fairfield*, and cruised in the Mediterranean touching at the various ports. He found that the fame of



the American navy officers as entertainers had reached every port, and as soon as the *Fairfield* dropped anchor, she was visited by scores of pleasure-loving people. Trenchard was greatly amazed to find what a large percentage of the population consisted of kings, queens, princes of the blood, dukes, and other ranks of high degree. He began to think—and his belief was shared by every man in the ship—that these ports must have been populated almost exclusively by aristocrats. The common sailors in the ship could ill conceal their disgust for these guests, because their visits entailed an immense amount of ceremony, and extra labor in manning the rigging, which of course, fell most heavily on poor Jack.

While at one of the Italian ports, where the *Fairfield* was infested with the usual swarm of royalty, great excitement was caused by one of the visitors falling down a hatchway. One of the guests,—a princess—somewhat terrified by the hurry and bustle attendant upon the fall, inquired of a rugged down-east quartermaster what the trouble was. "Oh, nothing much, marm. Only one of them 'ere kings tumbled down a hatchway and broke his neck."

It was while Trenchard was engaged in the

coast-survey, that he won unusual distinction in receiving a sword from Queen Victoria. He left the Mediterranean in 1842, and in the winter of 1845-1846 he was aboard the *Gallatin* engaged in surveying the coast of Georgia and Florida. During the summer of 1856 he commanded the *Vixen*, and surveyed the New England coast. Although great changes have been made in the Government coast-surveys since Trenchard's work, yet many of the maps now in use are based on his surveys. He also invented a tide gauge, which was adopted by the Coast Survey Bureau.

While off Cape Ann, August 14th of this year, Lieutenant Trenchard discovered a bark that seemed to be in a sinking condition. He ran down to her, and with no little risk, rescued the crew and sent them into Boston. The wreck proved to be the British bark *Adieu*, of Glasgow, bound for Boston. She had struck a dangerous reef near Cape Ann, and the weather at the time being rough, she was rapidly pounding to pieces, when discovered by Lieutenant Trenchard. A boat under the command of Mr. Morrison was sent aboard, and bore off the officers and crew who were completely exhausted. Had it not been for

the prompt assistance offered by the Americans, every soul would have perished. The British Consul at Boston, Sir Edward Grattan, highly complimented Lieutenant Trenchard on his service, and reported the matter to his government. In the following year, January 21, 1857, Lord Clarendon wrote: "Her Majesty's Government cannot allow the matter to pass without offering Lieutenant Trenchard and Mr. Morrison some mark of gratitude. They have, accordingly, caused to be prepared for each of these officers a sword, which I have the honor to transmit to you herewith, and I venture to express the hope, that they may be permitted to accept them, more especially as the officers of the *Vixen* declined to make any claim for salvage." It was against the laws of the United States for its officers to accept any present or gift from a foreign state or potentate, but in the case of Lieutenant Trenchard, Congress passed a special act, permitting him to receive the sword.





## CHAPTER V.

### OFF FOR THE CHINA SEA.

THAT the mass of the American people have always taken deep interest in the maintenance and development of the navy is shown by the close watch that is kept on our new cruisers. The slightest incident connected with them is promptly telegraphed all over the country, while a triumph in speed or any other detail is regarded as a matter of national rejoicing. The same interest was noticeable when the first group of steam frigates was constructed. Widely differing opinions were freely offered concerning them and their construction, and their trial performances were watched with minutest care. One of the first steam frigates was the side-wheeler *Powhatan*, and such a superb specimen of "advanced" naval architecture was she thought to be, that



it was decided to send her to the China station under the command of Capt. George F. Pearson or, "Honest George" as he was familiarly known. Lieutenant Trenchard was ordered to this vessel as her executive officer. The frigate was fitted for an extended cruise in the Far East at Norfolk, and she had the honor of having for a passenger from that port to Madeira, ex-President Pierce, wife, and suite.

The difficulty of getting new and complicated ideas of machinery to work properly, especially when applied to navigation, was brought out clearly in the attempts of the *Powhatan* to sail from this port. The ship got under way, December 7, 1857, and stood down the roads, receiving a salute from the receiving ship *Pennsylvania*. When the *Powhatan* was abreast of the hospital, one of her main valves got out of order, which compelled her to anchor and send a boat to the Navy Yard. The difficulty being adjusted, the frigate at 1 P. M., December 10th, again got under way, but scarcely had she passed Old Point Comfort when another defect was developed in her machinery, making it necessary for her to return to Hampton Roads, so that it was not until December 11th, that she finally got

to sea. In view of these accidents, it is not strange that so many of the old-time navy officers were opposed to the introduction of steam in war-ships. Such mishaps might have been accounted for by the superstitious seamen as an ill-omen for their long cruise, but, nevertheless, the *Powhatan* made the run across the Atlantic under sail and easy steam without serious mishap.

On the fourth day out she fell in with the American bark *Olando*, forty days from Palermo, for Boston. Supplying her with provisions and sending their letters aboard, the Americans continued their course. After a delay of two hours on the 20th to "adjust the engines" the *Powhatan* reached Funchal on the 27th, where the ex-President and his family went ashore, after "making a very appropriate address to the crew." The frigate left Funchal January 6, 1858, and after a pleasant run of twenty-one days, dropped anchor off Jamestown, St. Helena, where Lieutenant Trenchard visited the scene of Napoleon's captivity and death.

It was while leaving Jamestown that the *Powhatan's* career was nearly cut short by one of those accidents of the sea which are liable



to happen even under the most favorable circumstances. Having replenished her coal-bunkers, the frigate, on the evening of the 30th, got under way. She had not proceeded far from her anchorage, when, in the uncertain light of falling night, a vessel under full sail suddenly loomed up close off the starboard bow, evidently intending to cross the frigate's course. Alarms were promptly given, but it was too late; the *Powhatan* giving a broad sheer struck the stranger a slanting blow, carrying away her bowsprit and head-booms and tearing the bottom out of the starboard barge. The vessel proved to be the Dutch bark *Stad Enchede*. The Americans promptly sent boats to her assistance. Fortunately she had not been injured below the water-line, and taking her in tow the Americans brought her into port, where they remained until February 1st lending every assistance and sending aboard two of their spare topmasts.

Again leaving St. Helena on the evening of February 1st, the *Powhatan* shaped her course southward. With a view of saving her coal the ship was kept under sail as much as possible, at which times the "buckets" or blades of the paddle-wheels were taken off so as not to

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impede her progress through the water. But in spite of the greatest economy Lieutenant Trenchard, on February 9th, discovered that the ship had less than twenty-four hours of coal aboard, and as they were approaching Cape Town, where strong currents in the calm might carry them upon dangerous rocks, the ship was kept entirely under sail.

How necessary was this precaution, was seen several days later when the *Powhatan* had a narrow escape from shipwreck, being saved only by a slender supply of coal. The ship sailed down the African coast with the land in sight most of the way, until the 18th when she began to feel the heavy swell around the Cape of Good Hope which carried her towards the shore. As there was not sufficient wind to govern the vessel Lieutenant Trenchard had the buckets of the paddle-wheels replaced, preparatory to getting steam up. At daybreak, February 19th, heavy breakers were discovered about a mile and a half distant. The ship had been drifting toward them during the night and had come dangerously near before they were discovered. "Happily we succeeded at 4.30 A.M.," wrote Lieutenant Trenchard, "in getting steam up and most providentially es-

caped drifting upon the rocks toward which the current and heavy swell had set the ship so near."

Running into Table Bay the *Powhatan* exchanged salutes with the town and was visited by the American Consul, who was saluted with nine guns. Three days later the ship was dressed in bunting and a salute of twenty-one guns was fired in honor of Washington's birth. During a heavy gale, February 28th, the *Powhatan* sent a boat to assist a bark that had been driven ashore. The boat approached as near as possible but the breakers proved to be too formidable for her to render assistance. The crew of the stranded vessel subsequently escaped to shore. On March 6th, the *Powhatan* herself came near being placed in the same position. A sudden squall came up on the evening of that day and parted her bower chain. Fortunately the other chains held the ship fast.

Leaving Cape Town March 8th, the *Powhatan* had a pleasant run to Port Louis, Island of Mauritius. It was while at this place that Lieutenant Trenchard heard of the dreadful accident that befell the British troop ship *Sarah Sands*, an iron screw steamer from

Portsmouth, England, bound for Calcutta, having on board four hundred troops, including a number of women and children. When some days out from Port Louis, fire broke out in the ship and in the explosion of some powder part of the stern was blown out. Trenchard gives the following account of the accident in the words of a British officer who was aboard at the time. "On Wednesday, the 11th instant, one of the most fearful experiences of fire ever experienced by man broke out in the after-hole of the ship at 4.15 P.M. I was in my cabin dressing for dinner when I heard considerable bustle outside, and on going into the saloon saw smoke issue from one of the cabins on the port side. The fearful reality then flashed upon me that the ship was on fire. On my way to the deck I met Major Brett, who ordered the ammunition to be cleared out of the magazine, which was immediately attended to. The whole of the boats were ordered to be lowered, the ladies were put into the port life-boat, and they stood out from the ship. So sudden and rapid was this awful fire, that those amongst us who had their wives on board, had not time to take leave of them, for all that is dear to the soldier must be sacrificed

to the call of duty and his country's honor. I accordingly rushed into the magazine and superintended the getting up of the powder, which was soon cleared out of the starboard side. But that portion placed on the port side could not be got out for some time, owing to the density of smoke and heat. However, after a plentiful supply of water, volunteers came forward and brought up the ammunition, excepting one barrel which was dropped by one of the men and could not be recovered. Several of the gallant fellows who volunteered for this dangerous duty were brought up senseless, but were immediately succeeded by others, until the whole was removed."

"At 6 P.M. three rafts were constructed as a last resource, should we not succeed in putting out the fire. At 7 P.M. the flames were seen issuing from the quarter-deck; pumps, buckets, and every available article were put into requisition and worked most gallantly by officers and men, who combated the flames with utmost coolness. Too much praise cannot be given to Major Brett, in command of the troops during this fearful disaster, for the calm and soldier-like demeanor he displayed under our trying circumstances, being wholly supported



by all on board. At 11 P.M. a barrell of gunpowder together with the ship's ammunition exploded, blowing out the stern quarter of the vessel. Several persons were knocked down by the concussion. I was standing with a brother officer in command of a party working the pumps, and we were thrown forward for some distance and fell to the deck. This explosion caused a fearful and solemn pause of some seconds, when our brave and heroic adjutant sang out, 'All's right, lads, that will do us good, and with God's help, we will soon get the fire under,' and pumps and buckets were passed with fresh vigor."

"At this time the ship was in flames from the mainmast to the stern. At midnight the mizzenmast was one body of flames, and in half an hour fell overboard with a fearful crash. It is due to the officers in that part of the crew who were on board, to state that they did their duty manfully, but I regret that honesty compels me to say that a few of the ship's company deserted their vessel in a cowardly and disgraceful manner. At 1 A.M. on the 12th instant, the mainmast was observed to be on fire, and it was with the utmost difficulty that the flames were arrested. The mainyard was



set on fire by burning embers, but fortunately was put out by a party of soldiers and two seamen headed by the chief mate going aloft with wet blankets. Had it gone, nothing could have saved us. The decks were cut away, dividing the engine-room from the mainmast, which assisted materially in arresting the fire, as we were enabled to pour tons of water upon the iron bulk-head and coal-bunkers. This, together with wet blankets, kept the fire from going beyond the first compartment. At two o'clock the flames were arrested and driven back inch by inch, but not until the whole of that part of the ship was destroyed, from the engine-room to the stern. Our deliverance is one of the greatest miracles on record.

“To convey an idea of this awful catastrophe is impossible. It may be imagined, but never described. At four o'clock the danger appeared to be principally over, and half past five the fire was completely out. About this time I went with a party of men to pump the water out of the fore part of the ship. The after-hole contained eighteen feet of water; a heavy sea was running, and the ponderous iron water tanks were hurled from side to side making a noise like the roar of cannon. At this

time the sea was rushing in at the stern, where it had been damaged by the explosion, when pumps were manned, and buckets rigged, and all hands went to work cheerfully to empty the ship, being apprehensive that we had only escaped the fire to be swallowed up in the mighty deep. No pen can describe our feelings the morning after the fire, having been saved from the awful death that stared us in the face, and as far as short-sighted mortal could see were confronted by an equally horrible death.

"Having time to reflect I thought of the poor unfortunate women and children who had been exposed in an open boat all night, with scarcely any clothing save that of a blanket each, with a heavy sea on, and waves continually passing over the boat. My suspense at this moment was awful, but at six o'clock I was gratified with a sight of the boat and saw that all were alive. At eleven o'clock the ladies came on board, and it was a joyful meeting. We offered our humble and sincere thanks to the Almighty for His wonderful mercy extended to us, and preserving all from the awful death that threatened us by fire."

From Port Louis the *Powhatan* had an un-

eventful run to Acheen, Sumatra, where the ship was visited by a number of natives, including an influential rajah, who expressed particular interest and delight for the *Powhatan's* band. Our officers made visits on shore and found that the natives had not forgotten the chastisement of the Qualla Battooans of Sumatra administered twenty-eight years before, by the sailing frigate *Potomac*, Captain John Downes. The presence of the *Powhatan* flying the Stars and Stripes at her gaff, recalled the incident to the natives vividly, and they discussed the merits of the affair *pro* and *con* at some length with the Americans. On April 25th, while running near the town of Mallacca, the *Powhatan* lost her pilot in a most unexpected manner. Lieutenant Trenchard was in charge of the deck, when about 5 P.M. the Malay pilot Don Asba threw himself into the sea. Lieutenant Trenchard promptly ordered the engines to be stopped and a boat lowered. By the time this was done the pilot was fully a mile astern. By hard rowing the boat reached him in time, and he was brought back ; so that in twenty-five minutes the frigate was again underway. Lieutenant Trenchard quaintly remarks : " What could have prompted the poor

Malay pilot to take to the water seems a mystery?"

The *Powhatan* left Singapore May 4th, where she had stopped for a few days, and favored with smooth seas and clear weather, she sped on toward Hong Kong, skirting the coast of Cochin China, frequently having land in sight. She reached Hong Kong May 12th, where the *San Jacinto* was found flying the broad pennant of Captain Josiah Tattnall, who afterward transferred his flag to the *Powhatan*.





## CHAPTER VI.

### ON THE SCENE OF TROUBLE.

THE *Powhatan* arrived in eastern waters, just at the time England and France were at war with China, and were endeavoring to extort a treaty at the cannon's mouth. Although present as a neutral, the American flagship was destined to play an important part in the war, while Flag Officer Tattnall, Lieutenant Trenchard, and some of their men, became involved in a heroic episode that led to international complications. Shortly before the *Powhatan's* arrival the allied forces had bombarded Canton, and had captured Yeh, the Viceroy. As showing the spirit of the Chinese officials toward the "foreign devils" at this time, the following account of Yeh's capture is given from Trenchard's papers.

After the city had been stormed, an expedi-



tion was organized, headed by Mr. Parkes, afterwards Sir Harry Parkes, to capture the Viceroy. "On Tuesday an expedition into the interior of the city was planned and executed. Mr. Parkes had heard of Yeh's whereabouts and was anxious to catch him. His Excellency was reported to be residing at the Ut Wa College in the very centre of the city; but on arriving there, it was found that he had decamped the previous Thursday to the Lieutenant-General's yamun in the southwest corner of the old city. This information was given by a Chinese officer, who refused to point out the yamun, but depending on two Chinese guides, whom he had engaged by promise of reward, Mr. Parkes made his way to the place indicated, under the protection of about one hundred blue-jackets, commanded by Commodore Elliott, and Captain Key. Bursting open the doors of the yamun, the retreating figure of the High Commissioner was the signal for a general rush after him, and, notwithstanding the protestations of an officious mandarin, who endeavored to divert the chase from the Yeh to himself by shouting out 'Me, Yeh!' the stout Viceroy soon found himself in the embrace of Captain Key and the Commodore's

coxswain, who had outrun the others, and ranged up one on each side of him.

“ He was brought back and conducted to his seat and was soon identified by many Chinese, who were marched in singly, and asked by Mr. Parkes who the gentleman was. They all instantly fell down on their knees saying he was the Governor General. If he had had six headsmen in his train, and if we all had stood kidnapped before him, he could not have held his head more haughtily. It was a huge, sensual, flat face. The profile is nearly straight from the eyebrow to the chin. He wears his mandarin cap, his red button and his peacock's tail, but in other respects only the ordinary quilted blue tunic, and loose breeches, the usual winter wear of this part of China. He seated himself in an armchair, and some inferior mandarins, who pressed in afterward, stood around and made a little court for him. Our officers, who filled the room, passed to and fro upon their duties, and of course refrained from staring at him. Yet no one could look upon that face without feeling that he is in the presence of an extraordinary man. There was a ferocity about that restless, roving eye, which almost made you shrink from it. It is

the expression of a fierce and angry, but not courageous animal; while the long nails of his dirty fingers are trembling against the table, and his eyes are ranging into every part of the room in search of every face. His pose of dignity is too palpably simulated to inspire respect even if you could forget his deeds. But no one can look upon him with contempt.

"The two admirals and the generals now arrived, and after some salutations which were naturally more embarrassing to the captors than to the captured, Yeh was asked whether Mr. Cooper, who had been captured by the Chinese, was still living. Yeh burst forth into a loud laugh, which sounded to everyone present as though he were recollecting, and enjoying the recollections, of this poor man's sufferings. When he had finished his cachinnations he replied: 'I can't recollect about this man, but I will make inquiries to-morrow, and if he can be found, you shall have him.' The disgust was at that moment so great (for many in the room had known and esteemed poor Cooper) that if the audience could have decided the matter, Yeh would have been taken out and hanged. He was told that his answer was not courteous,

and he replied that it was, at any rate, the only answer he should give."

From this description of Yeh it will be seen how bitter was the feeling of the Chinese officials against foreigners, and what a treacherous and cruel foe the Americans, English, and French had to deal with. The capture of Canton was followed by the bombardment and capture of the forts guarding the mouth of the Peiho River, which flowed through Tientsin, the seaport of Peking, and flowed into the Gulf of Pechili. Finding that it was impossible to prevent the advance of the English and French upon Peking, the Imperial Commissioners, on July 12, 1858, signed a treaty which was to be sent to England for ratification, and was to be returned to Peking on or before June 26, 1859. In the words of England's representative, Lord Elgin, the concessions granted by China amounted "to a revolution, and involved the surrender of some of the most cherished principles of the traditional policy of the Empire. They had been extorted, therefore, from its fears."

Such being the case, the opinion was freely expressed by American and European residents in China, that the Chinese would resort



to treachery, if need be, to prevent the final ratification of these treaties, and fears were expressed that the British and French would be attacked if they attempted to reach Peking. The United States, also, at that time, was endeavoring to obtain a treaty from China by peaceful diplomacy, and the American squadron on the station had been reinforced, in anticipation of trouble.

The *Powhatan* left Hong Kong May 21st, and early on the morning of May 26th, while in thick, heavy weather, she suddenly came upon a large steamer, south bound. It proved to be the United States warship *Mississippi*, Captain Nicholson, who had just left the *Peiho*, which had been seized by the English and French forces. Parting company with the *Mississippi*, the *Powhatan* that afternoon anchored below Shanghai. Stopping here only long enough to recoal at the rate of three dollars a ton, she resumed her course for the *Peiho*, arriving there June 7th, where the United States warship *Minnesota* was found. A number of the *Minnesota's* officers, including Captain DuPont, visited the *Powhatan* during the day; but a damper was thrown over the pleasant occasion by an accident that resulted



fatally. At four o'clock in the afternoon Captain DuPont announced his intention of returning to his ship, and his gig was manned and placed in readiness for him. At this moment a heavy squall of wind and rain came up, which induced him to postpone his departure until it blew over. The crew of the gig was directed to get out and drop their boat astern, but before this could be done she was capsized, and her men—six in all—were thrown into the water, two of them being drowned. Several days afterward, while hauling out a launch, one of the davits in the *Powhatan* broke, precipitating the boat and its crew into the river, from which they were rescued only with great difficulty.

After visiting the Peiho forts, the *Powhatan* touched at various ports in China and Japan, and on June 20th of the following year she again appeared in the Gulf of Pechili, having on board John E. Ward and suite, who represented the United States in the pending negotiations. The fear that the Chinese would resort to treachery, as will be seen, proved to be well founded. Flag-Officer Tattnall found the allied French and English forces collected there, under the command of Admiral Hope.

The force consisted of several English and French cruisers which were too heavy to cross the outer bar, and the following gunboats: *Nimrod*, *Cormorant*, *Lee*, *Opossum*, *Haughty*, *Forrester*, *Banterer*, *Starling*, *Clover*, *Janus*, and *Kestrel*. Each of them carried two guns, 18-pound howitzers, with the exception of the *Nimrod* and the *Cormorant*, which carried six guns each. There was also a strong detachment of marines under Colonel Lemon. The crews of these gunboats amounted to about five hundred, officers and men.

The Peiho or North River is a short and rapid stream, cutting a channel through the alluvial plain of the Pechili. As it approaches the sea, it flows for the last five miles through a low, flat country, which is scarcely above the level of the river, and as the stream spreads out at high water it loses much of its velocity. A hard clay bank forms the bar on which, at low tide, there are only twenty-four inches of water, leaving broad stretches of mud-flats on each side. The great height of the tides on this coast, however, increase the depth of water on the bar at high tide to eleven feet, and conceal the vast tracts of mud-flats and sea-reeds which grow there. Less than two miles from

the bar, where the banks of the river rise abruptly to a considerable height, the Chinese had constructed mud and stone forts on the site of the fortifications destroyed by the English and French the year before.

Being erected on both sides of the river, they presented a formidable line of defence. On the left bank, looking up stream, were three mounds of earth, thirty feet high, well faced with solid masonry. On the top was a level space where three guns were mounted on three of the four sides. From this elevated platform, the guns pointed down at the river and could be fought in comparative security from anything like a horizontal fire. Round these three mounds heavy mud-batteries, twenty-two feet high, were constructed so as to protect the basements of the mounds from a breaching fire. These mud-batteries mounted guns that were perfectly casemated, and were connected into one great work by a series of curtains, pierced like the bastions for casemated guns, and covered from a flank attack by wet and dry ditches. This fortification was called the Grand Battery and was pierced for fifty guns.

With the exception of the guns mounted on each of the three mounds, every embrasure was



fitted with a mantlet. These mantlets were skilful inventions by means of which the embrasures in the batteries were concealed from the view of an attacking party. That the slow-going Chinese should have adopted this improved idea—which seems to have first been introduced at the siege of Sebastopol, only a few years before—has been urged as an evidence that these forts, if not constructed by Russians, were built under the direction of Russian officers. The mantlets were stout wooden frames, covered with rattan, so as to be proof against musket balls. They were worked on hinges, fitted on the outer and lower edge of the embrasures, and were lowered down or triced up, as the occasion required, by means of lines leading upward through the parapet on each side of the guns. When thus closed it was exceedingly difficult for an enemy, even when the parapets were not enveloped in smoke, to distinguish the embrasure from the solid wall of the battery.

The exact range of the position vessels must take in attacking the fort had been obtained long before, and a gun was loaded and aimed before the mantlet was lowered, thus revealing it to the enemy. When all was ready the mant-

let was dropped in a twinkling, the gun run out, the shot fired, and the recoil sent the gun back again ; and the same action drew up the mantlet. This could be done so quickly that it was almost impossible for an enemy to tell out of which embrasure the gun had been fired. Above and below the Grand Battery were two waspish-looking flanking forts, each of which had a mound similar to the Grand Battery and was protected by bastions. They had three tiers of guns and were connected with the main fortifications by earthworks. On the right hand, back of the river, stood another series of earthworks constructed on the same general plan of the Grand Battery, mounting about forty guns. All these elaborate preparations for the defence of the river, of course, were unknown at that time to the English and French.

As an additional defence, the Chinese had constructed with extraordinary skill three lines of barricades across the river. The first one consisted of a single row of iron stakes, each with a tripod base nine inches in circumference. The top of each of these stakes was pointed, besides which there was a sharp spur which could penetrate the hull of a vessel ascending the river. These stakes were driven



so that their tops were covered at high water. This barrier was about 550 yards from the centre of the Grand Battery, and about 900 yards from the fort opposite. About 450 yards above this was another barrier, which consisted of a rope eight inches in diameter, stretched across the river, and two heavy chain cables. They were twelve feet apart and were hove in as tight as possible. These cables were supported at a distance of every thirty feet by heavy spars, each one of which was carefully moored up and down stream. The third barrier, and perhaps the most formidable one of all, consisted of two massive rafts of rough timber, lashed and cross-lashed in all possible directions with ropes and chains. They were anchored within a few feet of each other, so that a vessel in passing would have to describe the figure of the letter S. The opening between the rafts was still further protected by a circular line of iron sticks which were covered at high water.

The allied squadrons arrived off the mouth of the Peiho River on the night of June 20, 1859. The sound of escaping steam from the steamers, and the clattering noise of chain cables running through the hawse holes in the stillness

of the hour, aroused the Chinese from their sleep. But they did not seem to be in the least disturbed by the arrival of such a large naval force of "red-headed Barbarians." When morning broke they gazed upon the vessels with stolid indifference, and then went about their usual work. Nothing about the place indicated that unusual preparations for opposing the entrance of a naval force in the river had been made. Obstructions were across the river, it is true, but these, the officials declared, were only to keep out rebels and pirates, who recently had been giving the Government much trouble. All was as quiet and sleepy as the most enthusiastic admirers of Chinese river scenery could desire.

From the decks of the ships the course of the Peiho River could be traced over the flat country far into the interior by the masts and sails of junks that moved sluggishly up and down the stream. The straggling village of Taku, glimpses of which could be had behind the forts, seemed to be pursuing its usual lazy, monotonous existence as a fishing hamlet. The tower of Little Temple, from which the Governor-General of Pechili had fled the year before, with its succession of quaint, peaked

roofs, was seen just beyond the fort on the left. For the first time in the experience of foreigners, a Chinese military post was without the usual lavish display of flags and tents denoting the presence of troops. A yellow, triangular flag floated from each of the two mounds, and a few officials of low rank were observed moving around the batteries as unconcerned as if the "foreign devils" were thousands of miles away, and small bodies of poorly-armed and shabbily dressed militia paraded through the works. Few of the guns in the embrasures, owing to the deceitful appearance of the mantlets, could be seen.

The first step taken by the British Admiral, on arriving off the bar, was to send a boat ashore to communicate with the commander of the forts, and to request that the barriers be removed, so that the gunboats might proceed up the river. The officer landed with this message but was not allowed to go further than the beach, where he was met by an official of low rank who refused to remove the obstructions, and said that the British should meet the proper representatives of the Emperor at another mouth of the Peiho River, ten miles to the north. The official concluded by saying



that he acted entirely upon his own responsibility, and that there were no higher officers at hand. So far there was nothing to excite Admiral Hope's suspicion of treachery, for everything had been conducted in an entirely good-natured way on the part of the Chinese, and the best of feeling was shown. Exasperated at being balked in his friendly visit to the capital, Admiral Hope wrote the authorities saying, that if the obstructions were not removed by the evening of June 24th, he would proceed to remove them himself.

While matters were in this condition, Mr. Ward, after consultation with Flag-Officer Tattnall, decided to remove up the river in the *Toey-Wan*, as if ignorant of the refusal on the part of the Chinese to allow the English and French to pass. The *Toey-Wan* was a small merchant steamer which had been chartered for the occasion by the Americans, as the *Powhatan* was too large a vessel to navigate the shallow waters in those parts. Mr. Ward determined that if the forts fired across the bow of his vessel he would anchor and communicate, but if they fired into his vessel, which was unarmed, he would retire. At 11 A.M., June 24th, the *Toey-Wan* steamed though the British and

French squadrons without communicating with them, and pushed up towards the barriers.

At that time the forts seemed to be entirely deserted, not a man being seen nor a gun in an embrasure, and although there were many flagstaffs not a flag was visible. When the *Toey-Wan* had approached within three hundred yards of the first barrier, she suddenly received a severe blow which made her tremble from stem to stern. It was soon after ascertained that she had run on the treacherous steep bank of the river that was visible at low tide, but was entirely concealed by the murky waters of the stream at high water. Every effort to back her off was unavailing, while the fast-falling tide made her position extremely critical, for not only was she entirely at the mercy of the batteries, but the falling water was leaving her partially on the edge of the bank, and when the tide had entirely receded, the probability was that she would tumble off the bank and fall into the water upside-down.

Observing the difficulty the American steamer was in, Admiral Hope sent the *Plover* to her aid, with a message that if Mr. Ward desired, he could hoist the American flag over



her. The *Plover* attempted to tow the *Toey-Wan* off, but the cable parted. Upon this the Admiral dispatched his flag-lieutenant with another gunboat, but even their combined efforts were unavailing. While the *Toey-Wan* was in this critical position, Captain Tattnell sent Lieutenant Trenchard and the interpreters to the nearest fort to inform the officer in command that the American Minister was on board the stranded steamer. In his journal, Lieutenant Trenchard says : " I was dispatched in the barge by Flag-Officer Tattnell as his representative, accompanied by Dr. Williams, and the Rev. Messrs. Martin and Atchinson, our interpreters, the former as the representative of Mr. Ward, to communicate with the officer in command of the fort. We passed inside of the lines of the stakes and landed at the extremity of a mud jetty, running out of the centre bastion on the left, and below the lower barrier. We were received by a guard of twenty men armed with spears, double swords, and long knives. They were rather ragged in appearance. Mr. Martin and myself held an interview with the officer. It was in substance that we had come here for the purpose of going up the Peiho River to Peking with our

minister, who had been directed to see the Emperor, and to deliver to him in person a letter from the President of the United States, and to ratify the treaty. The commissioners at Shanghai said there would be difficulty in passing up the river to Peking, and that instead of finding it clear we would meet obstructions placed in the channel. We requested that these obstructions be removed, so that we could pass up the river. The mandarin, or head man of the party, stated that the barriers could not be removed; that they had been placed there to protect the villages against the rebels and pirates, and that any attempt made to remove them would be resisted, and the forts would open fire." Lieutenant Trenchard returned with this answer. The *Toey-Wan* was finally released from her perilous position, and she moved down the river and took her station near the outer bar.





## CHAPTER VII.

### BATTLE OF THE PEIHO FORTS.

A HEAVY rain and a gale of wind prevented much from being done on June 22d, so that it was not until the night of the 23d that all the British gunboats were taken across the bar. Early on the morning of June 24, seven hundred British marines from Canton, under Colonel Lemon, were placed on board a number of junks and anchored near the bar to be held as a reserve force and a storming party, for in spite of the pacific appearance of the forts Admiral Hope was proceeding with all the caution of an experienced officer. Some uneasiness had been felt among the British by rumors that Russians were hovering near the forts, and probably would assist the Chinese if an attack was made. It was well known that a number of high Russian officials were in

Peking at that time, but whether any considerable number of Russian troops were clandestinely employed by the Chinese, was long an open question in the minds of the British public. Among the British seamen and marines, however, the prospects of a brush with the Chinese was anticipated with delight, which even the ominous transforming of the *Ciro-mandel* and the *Nosogary*, the French gunboats into hospital ships and anchored within convenient reach, did not allay.

On the night of June 24th, Admiral Hope sent three boats up the river under the command of Captain Willes of the *Chesapeake* for the purpose of removing the barriers. The boats, passed between the iron stakes constituting the first barrier, where Captain Willes left two of the boats to attach explosives for the purpose of blowing up the barrier, while he, in a third boat, pushed on to the third barrier. Here the Chinese sentinels could be seen walking up and down, and although the boats must have been seen by the people in the forts on both banks of the river, no attempt was made to disturb them. Scrambling over the rafts, Captain Willes was satisfied that it was impossible for the gunboats to remove the bar-



rier. Returning to the second barrier he exploded his cylinders and made a breach wide enough for a vessel to pass through. At this moment one or two guns from the fort were fired giving him warning to desist, but no general alarm on shore was noticed, and the formidable character of the batteries was not revealed. Before morning, however, as the British discovered the next day, the Chinese had repaired the breach made in the barrier.

At daylight on the following morning, June 25th, the same deceitful calm was maintained in and around the fort. At half-past three in the morning, the boatswains' whistles in the allied squadron began their merry chirping and sent all hands to breakfast, and by four o'clock the gunboats began to take up their prescribed positions. At this time the flood-tide was running strong, flowing in a muddy, turbid stream, up a tortuous gutter. Gradually that gutter became filled, and the waters, ruffled by a fresh breeze that blew the foul smell toward the forts, began to rise to the level of the mud-banks and finally washed over them and the reed-covered mud-flats, and began to lap against the foundations of the massive forts. The British began operations thus early, hop-



ing that by the time the flood-tide had ceased running, every vessel would be in position. But considerable delay was caused by the narrowness of the channel, and the strength of the breeze, which occasioned considerable confusion in the manœuvres; so that it was not until 11.30 A.M., or at high water, that the vessels were in position. Even then there was some delay caused by the grounding of the *Banterer* and the *Starling*. At two o'clock, when the ebb-tide was running strong, Admiral Hope, with his flag flying from the *Plover*, signalled the *Opossum* to remove an iron pile to which she had made fast. In thirty minutes the *Opossum* had wrenched the iron stake from its bed, and the gunboats, running through the breach, passed up to the second barrier where they were under the guns of the forts at point-blank range.

This was a moment of intense excitement. Every eye was fixed upon the batteries, but the same imperturbable calm that had been maintained the previous day was unbroken. Just as the *Plover* was attempting to break through the second barrier, however, a single gun was fired from the fort and a moment later all the mantlets were dropped, and forty heavy pieces

of artillery opened upon the little craft. At that instant Admiral Hope gave the signal, "Engage the enemy as closely as possible," and the other gunboats hastened to the support of their gallant leader. The enemy's guns had been so well trained on the space between the first and second barriers that almost every shot fired at the *Plover* and the *Opossum* took effect.

It seemed to be the object of the Chinese to annihilate the flagship, and within twenty minutes the *Plover* and the *Opossum* had so many killed and wounded that their batteries were almost silenced. Lieutenant-Commander Rason, of the *Plover*, was cut in two by a round shot. Captain M'Kenna, of the Admiral's staff, was one of the first to be killed, while the Admiral himself was seriously injured in the thigh. Whether or not the gunners of the fort were Chinese or Russian renegades, deserters and convicts swept up on the Siberian frontier, they fought with marvellous skill, and showed that they had been trained in the most advanced ideas of European artillery. For the first time in Chinese warfare the guns were so arranged as to concentrate their fire on any given point within the barriers. Further-

more, there were reserved supplies of guns and carriages. This was shown by the ease with which a dismounted gun was again firing away from a certain embrasure, for the English gun-boats, although firing at a disadvantage, planted their shot in the embrasures with considerable skill.

It was at this critical period of the fight that the Americans rendered assistance to the sorely tried British, which, so long as the British nation remembers, the affair of the Peiho Fort will not be forgotten. Captain Tattnall, and the other American officers in the *Toey-Wan*, had been witnessing the treacherous attack upon the allied squadron with feelings of anger and mortification. Finally, observing the desperate condition of the British Admiral, Tattnall exclaimed: "Blood is thicker than water!" "And he'd be damned if he'd stand by and see white men butchered before his eyes," wrote Trenchard in his journal. "No, sir," he said to Trenchard, "Old Tattnall isn't that kind, sir. This is the cause of humanity. Is that boat ready? Tell the men there is no need of side arms." Knowing that it was impossible for the British reserves to pull against the swift ebb-tide to the relief of their sorely-tried



brethren he sent an officer to Colonel Lemon, offering the services of the *Toey-Wan* in towing the British boats to the scene of action.

Just at this moment a boat was seen to emerge out of the smoke of battle and pull with desperate energy toward the Americans. When she came alongside, a midshipman quickly mounted the man ropes, and proceeding aft delivered a despatch to Flag-Officer Tattnall. The perusal of this note excited him at once, and he straightway got into his barge with Lieutenant Trenchard to pay an "official visit," as he expressed it, to the British Admiral. Away went the barge speeding over the bright glancing waters, followed by the English boat, both craft being soon lost in the dense smoke of battle. As Tattnall was passing a gunboat that was badly cut up, a shot plowed through the American colors, and left them a mere collection of long streamers. The British crews cheered as they saw the boat pass. Scarcely had the cheers been given, before another shot passed through the barge's quarter, instantly killing the coxswain, Hart, and wounding Trenchard, besides making a complete wreck of the boat. It was only with the greatest difficulty that the barge could be kept afloat long

enough to reach the side of the British flagship. On the quarter-deck Tattnell found the British Admiral sitting on a camp-stool desperately wounded, but still directing the fight. Forward, there was an 8-inch gun, with only one or two men near it, the rest of the crew having been killed or wounded and the reserves exhausted.

Tattnell exchanged a few messages of condolence with the Admiral, saying to his own boat crew: "Meantime, my good fellows, you might man that gun forward till the boat is ready, just as you would on your own ship." The Yankee tars went to the gun and found the crew nearly all killed or disabled. A bright little boy, twelve or thirteen years old, offered to supply them with powder. Laying-to, they loaded, and for nearly an hour fired the gun and declared that every shot hit the mark. They were then relieved by a boat-load of men from another ship, and walking aft they were met by Lieutenant Trenchard. Their powder-begrimed visages, and their heated appearance showed plainly enough what kind of work they had been engaged in. Assuming a severe tone, and realizing the neutral position the United States had taken in the matter, Lieu-



tenant Trenchard asked them what they had been doing? One of the brawny tars coolly replied: "Oh, nothing, sir, excepting lending a friendly hand to them fellows forward." Securing another boat the Americans returned to the *Toey-Wan*.

By this time the British were sorely pressed indeed, and they turned longing eyes toward their reserve force of six hundred men, which they had no means of bringing to battle. The *Toey-Wan* was the only vessel that could possibly bring the junks up against the rapid current. Realizing the situation, Tattnell took the junks in tow, and brought them into action. Strictly speaking, this was a serious breach of the neutrality of the United States; but Tattnell did not stop to consider this, and knowing that the British reserves could not be brought to the assistance of their sorely-pressed admiral unless the *Toey-Wan* took them in tow, he started boldly up the river with six hundred British reserves, where they were soon assisting their comrades.

A landing party of about six hundred men was placed ashore and stormed the Chinese forts. The British rushed madly down the ditch filled with water and made almost impass-

able by sharp stakes. They threw their ladders across the ditch and the sailors continued to advance in spite of the terrific fire. Some of them were beginning to climb the breastworks, when suddenly there arose the cry, "Russians!" The English supposed they had been fighting the Chinese, but now they believed the fortifications were manned by Russians. This thoroughly discouraged the British tars and in spite of the efforts of their officers they retreated to the beach. Here the seamen piled into their boats. All this time they were exposed to a terrific fire from the fort. There were not enough boats to take the men off. It was a terrible moment, and here again Tattnall earned the lasting gratitude of the English. He got his light draft tender *Toey-Wan* close into the shore, and took the fugitives aboard, and in this way many lives were saved. In this disastrous affair the allied forces, numbering one thousand one hundred, had eighty-nine killed and three hundred and forty-five wounded.

There is a sequel to this heroic episode which is best told in the words of Rear-Admiral Trenchard himself. When the *Powhatan* first arrived in the Chinese waters, the year before,

England was in the midst of many difficulties in the Far East and the coast of China fairly swarmed with her cruisers. On reaching Hong Kong in the summer of 1858 the *Powhatan's* crew were allowed a twenty-four hours' leave of absence after their long voyage. "Before the men went ashore," said Trenchard "they learned that it was best to keep elbow touching elbow, and that it was sometimes a stern necessity to fight. Each man was supplied with a sufficient amount of current coin to enable him to have a good time, and away they went as full of the spirit of fun and frolic as little children. Now, it happened that half the crew of the British frigate *Highflyer* also was ashore on leave of absence, and during the afternoon, when the American boys were feeling particularly good and had chartered, through the agency of Bumboat Sam, all the sedan chairs that could be hunted up, and formed a procession in Queen Street, that these bold Britains happened along as the sedan chairs were starting off with two Yankee tars in each.

"The novelty of the thing immediately took the eye of Johnnie Bull, and after the chairs had started, and trailed out nearly a quarter of



a mile with the Chinese bearers grunting their usual ditty and the Yankees singing 'The Star Spangled Banner' and other patriotic songs, the Englishmen could not refrain from complimenting the dash and originality of their cousins. Perhaps on this occasion there would have been no collision had not one of the men in the chairs shouted out to a group of English sailors, 'Hey! You d——d Lemon Squeezers, parbuckle yourselves out of our way and trice up the slack of your lip, d'ye hear.' That foolish sentence acted like a fire-brand in a powder magazine, and like magic the sedan chair was capsized and its cargo spilled out. A rush was made by the main body of the Highflyers, while the Chinamen abandoned their sedans and fled. The Yankees rallied around the unlucky tar, whose foolish remark in the enemy's camp had brought down the Philistines.

"At it they went, and a regular knock-down affair existed for fifteen minutes. For a while the Americans made a good show, but half a dozen boat crews reinforced the English, and the Yankees were forced to retire to a tea garden for reorganization and to repair damages. But they soon again took the street

and made war in regular orthodox style on the Highflyers. Possibly, the fact that a British war vessel of this name having been captured by the United States 44-gun frigate *President* in the war of 1812, had something to do with the unusual desire of the men of this particular ship to fight. However this may be, the affair lasted most of the afternoon. Late in the day a strong detachment of Yankees drove in the Highflyer's pickets and brought about another regular engagement. The police were powerless to interfere and a company of British soldiers was ordered out of the garrison to assist in restoring order.

"The sight of the redcoats acted like oil on the fire. However little American and English sailors loved each other, they all entertained a most cordial dislike for anything in the shape of a marine or a soldier, and the minute the cry was passed that the redcoats were coming, the Yankee and English tars, in a twinkling, seemed to forget that they were fighting one another and joined forces against the soldiers, who are the common enemies of every true seaman. At first the redcoats were severely handled, and at last were compelled to load with shot. Seeing that it was useless to fight



against leaden balls, the American and English seamen beat a precipitate retreat around the corner, and retiring to a distant part of the town fought out their own little difficulty to their hearts' content.

"Next morning the crew of the *Powhatan* returned on board, and they were a sight to behold. Almost every man of them had his nose cock-billed to starboard, and sprinkled in here and there were rickety-looking eyes that would have done credit even to the famous Donnybrook Fair. It took two or three days for the men to recover from the soreness, and for some months after that it got to be the proper thing to thrash an English sailor on sight.

"The character of the feud was growing worse and worse every day, so that it became really necessary for the *Powhatan* to change her port. After remaining in Hong Kong some weeks the *Powhatan* went to Penang, and nothing more was seen of the *Highflyer* until some months later, when a squadron of English light-draught vessels was collected at the mouth of the Peiho River to escort the British Ambassador, who was on his way to Peking. The *Highflyer* was the flagship of

this squadron. What happened when the English attacked the Chinese forts, the heroic visit of Captain Tattnall to Admiral Hope and the towing of the British reserve into action by the *Toey-wan* has just been narrated. But nothing more was heard of this until next winter when the *Powhatan* ran down to Hong Kong. As she steamed to her anchorage, she passed the British flagship *Highflyer*. As soon as the *Powhatan* was recognized, the British band struck up 'Should auld acquaintance be forgot' and, 'Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean.' Then the *Highflyer* ran up the American flag and the *Powhatan* hoisted the British flag, and salutes were mutually fired. Then the other British vessels in the harbor hoisted the Stars and Stripes and saluted. Soon after the Russian frigate saluted our flag, and the French warships also. The English and American sailors made excursions on shore together, and the former always stood ready to help an American out of a difficulty.

"On Christmas following, the American and English sailors made up a purse of eight hundred dollars, and sent for Bumboat Sam to have him cater to them in a way that would be an everlasting honor to his vocation. Sam promised to

furnish everything in the air, the ocean, and on the earth. He was true to his word, and two long tables were spread with fowl, fish, flesh, and fruits. Afternoon brought the guests from the English ship and the viands were flanked by the attacking party headed by the officers. Our executive officer made a little speech. Speeches, toasts, cold water, jest, and story had place in the order of the hour, and no one for a moment would have thought that the two crews, less than a year before, had been engaged in pounding each other's faces after the most approved style of prize-fighters.

"Next summer, when we were down at Penang, the *Powhatan's* crew got leave of absence for forty-eight hours. The *Highflyer* was there also. The two crews hobnobbed famously, and got up an excursion to a noted resort some six miles distant. The sailors hired coaches and saddle-horses, took along baskets of pop-beer, stout, claret, oranges, sardines, hams, herrings, etc. Every man carried a 'Penang lawyer.' The men started along the shell road, and in due time reached their destination, and everything was joyous during the entire leave of absence."



## CHAPTER VIII.

### A LAND CRUISE.

WHILE England and France were endeavoring to extort a treaty from China at the cannon's mouth, the United States, like the fox that secured the bone for which the bull-dog and the mastiff were fighting, quietly slipped in, and conducted a satisfactory negotiation with China months before England and France had attained their object. In the words of an English writer, "The calculating, long-backed diplomatists of the United States sent their admiral and envoy to reap the advantages for which the Englishmen were fighting." A day or two after the battle, the Chinese officials sent aboard the *Powhatan* twenty sheep, twenty hogs, one hundred and forty chickens, sixty ducks, two hundred and fifty pounds of vegetables, two hundred



and fifty pounds of fruit, two thousand five hundred pounds of flour, and two thousand pounds of rice.

In receiving these most acceptable gifts, the Americans did not forget their English and French friends, many of whom had been desperately wounded, and had been without food thirty-six hours. Unknown to the Chinese, the Americans promptly forwarded these provisions to the English and French squadron. It was in reference to this that an "eye-witness" wrote to the London *Times*: "Many of our men slept in the American tender (*Toey-Wan*) on the night of the fight. Cigars, coffee, brandy—everything a man could want—were placed before them. The American crew forgot themselves, and thought only of the British. A few days after the fight, a Chinese junk with a flag of truce brought fresh provisions to the *Powhatan*. These were immediately sent to our wounded. The bond of American brotherhood was deeply cemented in our trial at the Peiho. I believe there was not a man in the fleet who did not feel it growing up within him, and I am sure there are thousands, if I may not say millions, on both sides of the Atlantic, who will join me in the



fervent wish that that feeling of brotherhood may take deeper and deeper root in both lands."

The result of the battle of the Peiho, of course, brought to a close all diplomatic relations between the English and French and the Chinese government, and the allied naval forces retired in order to make preparations for a more determined attack upon the forts. The *Powhatan*, however, remained on the scene of action, and a few days later, July 5th, two mandarins came aboard with a letter for Mr. Ward, from Hang Fu, the Governor-General, requesting an interview; and on the 8th, Mr. Ward and his suite landed at the town of Pei-Tang, twelve miles to the north of the Peiho, and proceeded to the audience chamber, where they were received in the most friendly manner. The Governor-General assured Mr. Ward that he would be able to proceed to Peking in a short time, and meantime he must consider himself a guest. On the morning of the 11th, two Chinese officials called on Mr. Ward, and informed him that on the 20th he could start for Peking.

Having completed all his preparations, Mr. Ward left the *Pohawtan* on the afternoon of

July 19th, having with him W. W. Ward as Secretary of Legation ; Dr. John L. Fox of the *Mississippi* ; Flag-Lieutenant Trenchard ; Purser B. F. Gallagher ; Chief Engineer William H. Shock ; Lieutenant A. W. Haberscham ; Captain A. S. Taylor, of the Marine Corps ; Assistant Surgeon, John W. Sandford ; Chaplain Henry Wood ; Commodore's Secretary John Allmand—all of the *Powhatan*. S. W. Williams, W. P. Martin, and the Rev. Mr. Atchinson, acted as interpreters, besides which there were two attachés, three marines, and a valet, besides ten chinese waiters, cooks, and servants. Considerable delay in starting was caused by the Chinese insisting on understanding the exact rank of each of the Americans, which they declared must be printed on flags, and mounted on the cart assigned to each of them. As the Chinese vocabulary did not contain names that corresponded exactly with European ideas of rank, the difficulty was finally settled in this way. The captains, lieutenants, etc., were easily disposed of. The doctor was known as the Chief medicine-man, the purser as "Chief of the Silver Treasure" the chaplain as the "Josh-man" ; the chief engineer, as "Chief of Fire Kings."

These ranks were duly inscribed on small yellow flags attached to a staff, and in the order of precedence they left Pei-Tang early on the morning of July 20th. The Chinese official escort consisted of Ten Ung-Hau, a blue-ball mandarin, salt commissioner; Chang, a colonel, red-buttoned mandarin; Lee, a blue-buttoned mandarin; Fei and Pein Chinese prefects, with crystal balls.

The first part of the journey was to be undertaken in ox-carts, which were entirely without springs and covered with canvas top, mounted on two wheels and drawn by two mules in tandem. The first part of the journey was through a dismal burying-ground, on which thousands of conical-shaped grave mounds had been thrown. The vast number of graves induced our officers to believe that dead men were far more in evidence in China than live men. After two hours of patient toil the mules carried the Americans through this graveyard, and at noon they reached a village which was the first stopping-place. The house at which they stopped was profusely decorated with strips of red silk upon which were written Chinese characters.

When these characters were interpreted to



our officers they were quite overwhelmed. They were intended to express the joy and good wishes of the Chinese Government on the first American official visit to his domains. Some of these mottoes were translated as follows: "Literature like a good horse is as vigorous as a thousand autumns;" "The virtue of sages is like sweet wine;" "The words of a King are like silken sounds;" "Great joy;" "Felicitous sun, auspicious cloud;" "Harmonious breezes, sweet rains;" "Receive all Heaven's happiness;" "Imagination, like a great dragon, soars a hundred feet;" "Happiness comes from Heaven;" "Heaven's grace and riches;" "The Kingdom's favors are many." There were many others, but our officers found the interpretation of these quite enough.

Early the next morning the journey was "resumed in heavenly weather and over hellish roads" as one of the officers expressed it. At all the stopping-places the American officers found the most elaborate preparations made for their accommodation. Sumptuous dinners awaited them, and everything in the eating line known to Chinese culinary art was waiting for them. Our officers, however, confined



themselves to a few well-known dishes, following the rule laid down by the experienced Europeans in China, "Never partake of anything in the way of flesh or fowl unless the head or legs are present or accounted for." On the close of the second day they reached the banks of the river which proved to be the Peiho, the Chinese taking this circuitous route evidently for the purpose of confusing the Americans as to the geography of the country. Here the party embarked in junks, and for the rest of the distance proceeded quite comfortably by water. The junks were pulled by a tow-line by ten Chinese coolies. On the 26th they passed through an opening in a barrier thrown across the river, which was just wide enough to admit the passage of the largest junk. It was constructed of heavy logs of from ten to fourteen inches in diameter, and extended in a line with the course of the river about twelve feet. This barrier evidently had been constructed as an additional defence to the Capital against the gun-boats.

Our officers arrived in Peking on the 27th, and were conducted to an old palace, where they were kept in close confinement, on one pretext or another, by the Chinese until the

negotiations were completed, it being the policy of the Chinese to allow the Americans to learn as little as possible about the country. It was at this stage of the negotiations that Mr. Ward showed his true Americanism. The Chinese officials endeavored to induce him to perform the *ko-taw* before the Emperor; that is, fall on his hands and knees, and in that attitude crawl on the floor toward the Emperor until at a given distance, when he was to stop, and knock the floor nine times with his forehead. Mr. Ward absolutely refused to submit to any such ceremony, and declared that he would salute the Emperor in no other way than it was customary to salute the President of the United States. On August 11th, the party returned to Pei-Tang, arriving there after five days of fatiguing travel, where the treaties were formally exchanged. After that the American officers returned to the *Powhatan*, that vessel shortly afterward returning to the United States, having on board the Japanese Commissioners.





## CHAPTER IX.

### EARLY SERVICE IN THE CIVIL WAR.

IT has been said that the greatest military commanders displayed quite as much skill in feeding their armies as in arranging their lines of battle. Whether this is exaggerated or not, it is certain that they spent much energy and forethought in this important department. Probably no one realizes more than commanding generals the difficulty of fighting on an empty stomach; and a careful perusal of their lives shows that they made great efforts not only to supply their men with an abundance of wholesome food, but to secure even luxuries. The feeding of the hundreds of thousands of men who kept the field during the civil war in the United States, might well form in itself an interesting history. The transportation of immense quan-



tities of provisions, medical stores, and general supplies, indispensable to active military operations, over all kinds of roads, in all sorts of weather, and at all hours of the night and day, was a task of appalling magnitude ; and it was largely on the successful and prompt performance of this work that the success of many campaigns depended.

Ordinarily, little glory has been accorded the commissariat department, the sutler's division, or the cooking-vats ; while the patient, hard-working mule of the wagon-train has come in for his full share of ridicule. Even the hero of a successful foraging party has been denied a serious place among the men who contributed in more than an ordinary degree to the successful termination of the war, and his exploits have been relegated to the category of camp-fire yarns and open-hearth tales, rather than to the dignified record of history. Yet it must be admitted that the success of the heroes who fought in the front ranks was, to an appreciable extent, due to the men who patiently followed the army from one point to another, and who frequently were quite as much exposed to the main attack of the enemy as was the vanguard, and often were



called upon to do some desperate fighting in order to defend the supplies from the swift raids of a daring and skilful foe. In short, it might well be a question open to serious argument, whether or not, in proportion to their numbers, the men having the provision trains in charge did not do as much real fighting as the troops forming the line of battle.

There is an important division of this corps of food-suppliers that performed gallant service during the Civil War which seemed to have escaped public attention ; and that is the division which kept our warriors on the high seas supplied with provisions. The commissariat department of the army has been more or less noticed in the popular narratives of the day, but this is far from being the case with the "commissariat's department" of the navy. One of the serious problems that confronted the Government in maintaining the blockade of Southern ports, was that of supplying our squadrons with necessary stores. The dreary monotony of the blockade service off the low, fever-stricken coasts of the Gulf States was rendered more irksome by the fogs prevailing at certain seasons of the year, which kept the ships constantly damp and in an unhealthy

condition. This, together with the salt meat, canned provisions, and the lifeless monotony of the service, had a most depressing effect upon the officers and crews. Cut off from all regular communication with the North ; constantly exposed to sudden attacks from a vigilant foe ; they remained for weeks at a time ignorant of the progress of the war, except what they learned from an occasional Southern newspaper, or picked up from the fishermen ; and this, it may well be imagined, was so radiant with Confederate successes as to lead our officers to believe that the Union was going rapidly and irretrievably to pieces.

A touching illustration of the privations our officers suffered is had in a private note from Flag-Officer James S. Lardner to Lieutenant Trenchard when the latter, in the *Rhode Island*, was at Key West. The note is dated, "U. S. Frigate *St. Lawrence*, Key West, Oct. 6, 1861: My dear Trenchard: Many thanks for your kind note and handsome present of fruit ; most acceptable in these scorching times. I regret extremely that the fever prevents me from having the pleasure of seeing you, and hope by the time you touch here on your return it will have passed away. With

the present weather, there is no danger of any new cases. About ten days ago the weather was like this for awhile, and then there were no new cases until within a few days, when the hot weather returned, and brought it back. There has been only one death in the last ten days."

For the purpose of keeping the blockade squadrons supplied with fresh provisions, and for securing a means for transporting the sick, wounded, prisoners, arms, ammunition, and the mails, the Government early in the war secured two steamers, christened *Connecticut* and *Rhode Island*, and detailed them for this important service. Why they were named after two of the smallest Northern states is difficult to understand, for the part they took in the war was by no means an unimportant one as the hundreds of surviving officers who sat down to well-provisioned messes will cheerfully attest. Aside from this duty they were frequently called upon to perform more warlike service in the way of chasing privateers or bombarding fortifications.

Of such importance to the blockading squadron were the visits of the *Connecticut* and the *Rhode Island* that Flag-Officer William Mer-



vine, commanding the Gulf blockading squadrons early in the war, issued the following order to the commanders of his vessels: "On making out the distinguishing numbers of the steamers *Rhode Island* and *Connecticut*, you will have your boats lowered to receive supplies of vegetables and fresh provisions, thereby giving to those steamers quick dispatch." We get a good idea of the nature of this service in a letter from Commodore Hiram Paulding, a veteran of the war of 1812, to Lieutenant Trenchard, dated January, 1862. "I have the pleasure to receive your note, and the green turtle heralded its coming. The first was kindly written, and the last most excellent eating, the objection being the great trouble it imposed upon you. No bill of expense came and I wait with all becoming solicitude the announcement of my responsibility. I thank you most sincerely for your kind remembrance, and Mrs. Paulding and the children unite with me in congratulations upon a successful trip and a safe, and I trust a happy, return. I have just learned that you are preparing to go with supplies [to the blockading squadrons]; I would have liked it better if you were here [in Washington] but am glad your ship is not to be



withdrawn from the important service of conveying supplies, in which she has done her work so well. You may prefer other service but cannot find a more useful place for the public good. Your experience and ability fit you so eminently for your command, that no one could supersede you in the *Rhode Island* without inconvenience and discomfort to the blockade. So I hope you will cheerfully control any desire that you may have to knock the rebels on the head. I hope you will not be caught in the ice, which is to be apprehended. I saw your First Lieutenant (Mr. Pennell) yesterday looking up a command amongst the small purchase steamers from which I think he made a selection. As usual, we are going on fitting and sending to sea. Porter will get off this week with his heavy bomb flotilla, which will have a great power for mischief."

In a letter from Acting Master J. M. Wainwright, U. S. N., off Galveston, is seen the value of the service performed by the supply-steamers. "Many thanks for your kindness in sending the paper and the Navy Register. I am also much gratified that you called on my uncle. I understand this is your last trip in

the *Rhode Island* as a supply-steamer. I am sorry we are to lose so pleasant a monthly visitor, but I suppose you are tired of this duty, and I hope you may get a very rich berth instead."

The *Rhode Island* especially had a most interesting and romantic career as a supply-steamer. During the Civil War she steamed over 56,200 miles running from one blockading squadron to another, and bringing good cheer to the officers and men ; taking an occasional dash in the West Indies after Confederate cruisers ; rescuing the survivors of the ill-fated *Monitor* ; lending a hand to ship-wrecked sailors ; protecting Americans in foreign ports ; acting as flagship to rear admirals ; and finally blossoming out as a full-fledged gunboat and capturing a number of vessels.

This vessel, formerly the *Eagle*, was a side-wheel steamer built for the Charleston Line, and was new at the outbreak of hostilities. She was admirably adapted for the supply-service, being 236 feet over all, having thirty-six feet beam and 1517 tons. The cabins were finished in polished maple and walnut ; the staterooms had excellent mattresses and blankets ; while there was a complete outfit of china, glassware

and table-linen, besides every improvement then known in steam passenger vessels. It can be easily imagined that the ship was a most comfortable and luxurious home for a naval officer, especially when compared with the wretched under-water accommodations of the monitors. She was purchased by the Government in New York, July 18, 1861, for \$185,000, and a battery of eight 8-inch shell guns was mounted on her, while a heavy plating of iron on her bow made her formidable as a ram, especially in view of her speed, which was about fourteen knots. In November, 1862, this armament was increased by the addition of two thirty-pounder rifled guns, and one 9-inch pivot gun as a bow-chaser. An ice-house and other fittings necessary to the supply-service were built in her while at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. When the war was over she was sold, October 1, 1876, to her first owners.

The peculiar nature of the service on which the *Rhode Island* was engaged will be seen in the order issued July 27, 1861, in which the Government showed its anxiety to make the officers on the blockading stations as comfortable as possible : "You are authorized to furnish Messrs. McBride and Elder with a passage



for one person, and also a store-room in the *Rhode Island* to enable them to supply the officers' messes of the blockading squadrons with stores, etc. [Probably such luxuries as were not allowed in the general rations.] They also proposed to make arrangements for washing the clothes of the officers, and if such an arrangement be concluded you will afford them facilities, if it can be done without detriment to the public service for accomplishing this object.

GIDEON WELLES."

The care with which the supplies were measured out to each vessel of the blockading squadron is seen in an order dated July 25, 1861, from the Bureau of Provisions and Clothing: "The Bureau having directed provisions, clothing and small stores and candles to be supplied by the *Rhode Island* under your command, you will direct the paymaster having charge of these stores to deliver them on the outward run, only to those vessels having less than a two months' supply of these articles. On the return trip of the *Rhode Island* the stores remaining will be distributed to the vessels most in need of them. This order does not apply to fresh beef and fresh vegetables, or to ice. H. BRIDGE."

Special provision was made for the accommo-



dation of the all-important and always-welcomed paymaster, as will be seen in an order dated April 22, 1862: "In addition to the space necessary for fresh beef and vegetables which may be ordered by the Bureau of Provisions and Clothing, you will be pleased to assign for the use of the Paymaster's Department on board the supply-steamer *Rhode Island*, the space of 1600 cubic feet, in one or more apartments, as may be most expedient, the same to be well secured and placed under the exclusive control of the Paymaster or Assistant-Paymaster of the vessel. This space will be allotted in the driest and most convenient part of the vessel available for cargo, and will in no case be taken for any other purpose than for paymaster's stores on board as cargo, except by the special order of the Secretary of the Navy or the Chief of the Bureau of Provisions and Clothing.

"GIDEON WELLES."

On April 19, 1861, Lieutenant Trenchard was ordered to command the *Keystone State*, then at Philadelphia. He sailed from the navy-yard, under sealed orders, for Norfolk. Arriving there forty-eight hours after her purchase, completely armed and equipped, he found the place in flames, the frigate *Cumber-*

*land*, especially, being in great danger. She had been hemmed in, by the Confederates sinking a number of vessels, so as to obstruct the channel. Waiting until high tide, the *Keystone State*, with the steam tug *Yankee*, succeeded, after an hour of hard work, in crushing through these obstructions and rescuing the *Cumberland*. Flag-Officer Hiram Paulding transferred his flag to the *Keystone State*, upon which she proceeded to Washington, having on board the marines of the Norfolk Navy-Yard and several officers. Here he received the following complimentary order from Secretary Welles: "Upon Commander G. H. Scott's reporting, you will regard yourself as detached from the command of the *Keystone State*, and you will report to Captain Du Pont for temporary duty at the navy-yard under his command. The Department tenders its high appreciation of your promptness and efficiency while in command." On June 19, 1861, he, Trenchard, was ordered to command the *Rhode Island*, his selection being due, probably, to the fact that he had been engaged in the coast-survey, 1852-1857, thereby becoming intimately acquainted with the Southern coasts.

The other officers of the *Rhode Island* at

the beginning of her career were Lieut. J. A. Pennell; Acting-Masters, Henry Churchill, T. N. Myer, and William Williams; Assistant Surgeon Samuel R. Foreman; Chief Engineer John F. McCutchen; Third Assistant Engineers, George H. Rutter, Joseph C. Lewis, Greenville Lewis, and James R. Webb; Paymaster, Richard Hall Douglass; Acting-Masters' Mates, A. B. Causse, Eugene W. Watson, E. R. Davidson, John O'Hare, and J. Richmond; Paymaster's Clerk, Frank H. Deal; and Captain's Clerk, Newcomb M. Bassett. Most of these officers were volunteers in the service, and were highly spoken of by their commander. Of McCutchen, Trenchard says: "He was always ready to have steam up, and was a most capable engineer."

That the work of the *Rhode Island* was not to be entirely one of peace, will be seen by the order Lieutenant Trenchard received from the Secretary of the Navy, dated April 27, 1861: "It will be the duty of all Government vessels to seize or capture any privateer or vessel it may meet on the high seas or in any waters, or making hostile demonstrations toward the United States or any of its citizens. Vessels having on board arms, munitions, articles con-



traband, or which are of suspicious character, or that claim to belong to, or have authority from, any government or pretended government not recognized by the United States, should be at once captured. All commanders of sea-going vessels will be vigilant and energetic in carrying out these orders."

The sphere of action given to the *Rhode Island* was further enlarged by an order from Secretary Welles, dated October 1, 1861: "On your arrival from each trip to the blockading squadron, the Department desires you to furnish it with the following papers: 1st. List of the passengers brought home, from what vessel received, and the cause of the return. 2d. An abstract of vessels spoken and boarded during the outward and homeward passages, when and where boarded, and your proceedings in each case. 3d. A list of the vessels to which you furnished supplies during the outward passage, when and where supplied, and the nature and values of the supplied. 4th. A similar list respecting vessels supplied on the homeward passage. You will also furnish, before leaving for the blockading squadron, a list of passengers and their destinations."



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*Wachusett*, the former about forty

miles north of Cape Hatteras, and the latter some thirty miles south of Cape Fear. The officers and crews of these vessels expressed great delight on making out the *Rhode Island's* number, as indeed did all the crews engaged in blockade duty. "The officers of the *Savannah*," wrote Lieutenant Trenchard, "were delighted with a surprise in the receipt of their letters; supplied the *Wabash* with fresh provisions, stores, etc., and stood on our course for Charleston." The *Wabash*, at the time had in tow a schooner which she had recaptured from the Confederate privateer *Dixie*. Before Lieutenant Trenchard left the *Wabash* he captured a French brig that had attempted to violate the blockade.

On Sunday, August 4th, the *Rhode Island* arrived off Charleston. Just as day was breaking the lookout reported a suspicious-looking schooner between them and the land. Lieutenant Trenchard promptly made chase, upon which the schooner put on every stitch of canvas and endeavored to gain the inlet. The Union steamer was rapidly gaining, and every moment the order to open fire was expected when the leadsman reported shoals. Finding that the water continued to shoal, Lieutenant

Trenchard was compelled to put about before he could get within striking distance of the chase. He then ran into the main ship channel at Charleston, where he found the frigate *Roanoke*, Captain William C. Nicholson, having Flag-Officer Garrett J. Pendergrast aboard; the steamer *Seminole*, Commander Thompson; and the sloop-of-war *Vandalia*, Commander S. Philips Lee, at anchor.

While at this place the Union officers experienced one of those serio-comic difficulties that were so common during the war. The officers of the *Rhode Island* had the kindest of dispositions, and held human slavery to be the most abominable of institutions. They entered upon their first active service in this war with a resolute determination to do all in their power to release the negro from his "horrible bondage." The first opportunity occurred off Charleston. Two negroes, about nineteen years of age, were innocently paddling along the shore in a canoe enjoying themselves thoroughly, and apparently unconscious of their danger in being rescued from their "horrible bondage." When they were discovered, a boat from the *Rhode Island* promptly pulled off with a marine guard, and after a vigorous effort

it overtook the canoe and brought the negroes aboard.

So far everything had progressed as satisfactorily as the most ardent humanitarian could desire. But soon the question arose, "What shall we do with the negroes?" Dirty, and almost destitute of clothing, they were most persistent in obtruding themselves in just those parts of the ship where they were least wanted. In the first gush of kindliness for waifs rescued from "horrible bondage," the Union officers did not like to order their visitors around like the rest of the crew; and the result was that Sambo and Jupiter soon became intolerable nuisances, especially for the officers; for the negroes seemed to think no part of the ship too good for them, and that the persons of the officers were not too sacred to be handled. They took a fancy especially to the gold lace on the uniforms, and insisted on passing their horny hands over it. The nuisance became so great that after a consultation it was decided to send the "released slaves" aboard the *Roa-noke*. But Flag-Officer Pendergrast had been on the station longer than the officers of the *Rhode Island*, and undoubtedly had had experience with the escaped slaves aboard his ship,



so he promptly sent them back to the *Rhode Island* with instructions to land them under a flag of truce, or to keep them on board until they fell in with Flag-Officer Stringham, to whom they might be given up.

But here another difficulty arose. It was doubtful if the *Rhode Island* would fall in with the old commodore, short of several months, and the idea began to prevail among the *Rhode Island's* officers that perhaps even Stringham might have so far satiated his desire to release the poor negro from his "horrible bondage," as to refuse to take them aboard of his ship and again send them back to the *Rhode Island*, with further indefinite instructions. The prospect of having the negroes aboard the ship several months, during the hottest part of the year, in a tropical climate, was too much for the intensely anti-slavery officers of the *Rhode Island*, and finally it was decided to land them under a flag of truce, and leave them—to their "horrible bondage." On no other occasion do we find the *Rhode Island's* officers taking aboard fugitive negroes ; still less sending armed boats out to capture them.

Touching at Savannah, August 5th, where she supplied the sailing frigate *St. Lawrence*

with fresh provisions, the *Rhode Island* arrived at Fernandina about seven o'clock the same evening, where she found the United States sailing sloop-of-war *Jamestown*, Commander Charles Green. The *Jamestown* had just had an exciting chase and fight with a large blockade-runner off the mouth of St. Mary's. Early in the day, while near this river, Commander Green discovered a large ship standing for the bar, apparently determined to get into the river at all hazards. Chase was promptly given; and in a short time both vessels were stretching away at full speed. Finding that it would be impossible to escape, the Confederate commander headed for the shore, and in a few minutes had his ship hard and fast aground. Well-armed boats were at once sent to take possession of the vessel and to get her off. In doing this, our men were fired upon from the shore with artillery and musketry, and a desperate effort was made by the enemy to get a gun from the land to the ship to aid in her defence. But the boats from the *Jamestown* prevented this, and the Union tars soon took possession of the stranded craft, only a few minutes after she had been deserted by her officers and crew.

An examination was begun to ascertain the character of the cargo, but as night came on with every indication of a storm, it was decided to set fire to the ship and return to the *Jamestown*. This was done and the vessel was burned to the water's edge. She proved to be the sailing ship *Alvarado*, of and for Boston from Cape Town, and the impression was that she had been captured, and was being carried into St. Mary's, or that the prize-master had concluded to run the ship into that port and sell her. The log evidently had been written by a female, for the delicate handwriting indicated it. The last entry made in it was: "We are chased by a man-of-war, but I think we will escape her and get safely into St. Mary's." "It was a gallant affair," wrote Lieutenant Trenchard, "on the part of the *Jamestown*; and the officers and crew deserve the greatest credit for the daring exploit. They were exposed during the greater part of the time to a heavy fire from the artillery brought to bear on them from the shore. A large body of Confederate soldiers witnessed the affair from the shore. Our opportune arrival with fresh supplies proved most acceptable to them on their return from the expedition."



On Tuesday, August 6th, while off Cape Canavaral, Lieutenant Trenchard records that he gave his first dinner-party. Paymasters Elisha W. Dunn, and Henry H. Pangborn, and Messrs. Churchill, Blake, and Baldwin being the guests.

In the early part of the afternoon of the following day, while off the Florida Reefs, bound for Key West, a suspicious-looking vessel was discovered. The *Rhode Island* showed her colors, and as the stranger did not display hers, a blank cartridge was fired. As it produced no effect Lieutenant Trenchard fired a shot astern of her. This also was without effect, "and we were about to fire another shot when he condescended to hoist his flag. The Captain being asked why he did not display his colors, replied, that he could not make ours out very clearly, and thought us 'Seseshish' and had made up his mind that he would not be captured with the Stars and Stripes flying, or give the rebels an opportunity for hauling it down. Another suspicious craft hove in sight after sunset with, as we supposed, a schooner in tow. Went to quarters and boarded her. She proved to be a Spanish bark from Havana."

Stopping at Key West, St. Marks, Appala-



chicola, the Eastern Pass, and Pensacola, the *Rhode Island* found the *Macedonian*, the *Cru-sader*, the *Preble*, the *Cuyler*, (Captain Francis B. Ellison) the *Montauk*, (Commander James H. Strong), the *Water Witch*, (Commander William Ronckendorff), the *Montgomery*, the *Wyandotte*, the *Colorado*, and the *Mississippi* at those ports, and supplied them with the prescribed quota of provisions.

The peculiar danger of the service on which the *Rhode Island* was engaged was well illustrated when she approached Ship Island, near the mouth of the Mississippi River, at that time the headquarters of the squadron operating against New Orleans. The *Rhode Island* had left Pensacola, and at one o'clock on the morning of August 14th she discovered a light directly ahead. At that moment it was uncertain whether it was the light of a friend or of a foe. The belief that the stranger was an enemy was strengthened by the fact that it was not moving and apparently was waiting for a favorable opportunity to attack. The crew of the *Rhode Island* was sent to quarters and every preparation was made for immediate action. In order to avoid the danger of the battle between friends, Lieutenant Trenchard hoisted

his distinguishing lights and kept them up over an hour. But the stranger did not seem to understand the signal and made unintelligible answers, which only strengthened the belief that an enemy was at hand.

Fortunately both commanders had so little faith in the efficiency of the night-signal service then in vogue in the United States Navy, that they believed a mistake possible on both sides, and so refrained from firing until they could exchange hails, and establish their identity. "It was a relief," wrote Lieutenant Trenchard, "to get within hail and recognize friend from foe." The stranger proved to be the United States warship *Massachusetts*, Commander Smith, and instead of firing a broadside of cold iron into him, Lieutenant Trenchard accompanied the *Massachusetts* to her anchorage at Chandlers Island, and furnished her officers and crew with a welcomed supply of fresh provisions.

Three o'clock that afternoon Lieutenant Trenchard boarded a strange vessel, but finding her to be an English sloop-of-war, he proceeded on his way, and at eight P.M. anchored off Pass á l'outré near the *Brooklyn* and the *St. Louis*, which vessels, also were supplied with fresh provisions.

Only three nights after his uncomfortable experience with the *Massachusetts* Lieutenant Trenchard had another illustration of the imperfect system of night-signals then in use in the Navy. This time, August 17th, he was approaching Galveston early in the morning. The United States Steamer *South Carolina*, Commander James Alden, was on guard off port. "Great care had been taken in approaching," wrote Lieutenant Trenchard, "as she had fancied us to be a suspicious craft, and as our night-signals did not appear to be understood it was necessary to display a little tact to avoid being fired into, which was accomplished by our running round the *South Carolina*, and approaching her stern slowly until coming within hail. Commander Alden was greatly relieved on learning the name of our steamer and getting his letters and good news from home. I breakfasted with him and he lunched with me."

Leaving the bark *Davis*, of Philadelphia, laden with coal for the squadron, and the schooner *Wanderer* at this place, the *Rhode Island* began her return trip. Giving the *Huntsville* a supply of fresh provisions south of Shell Key Light, the *Rhode Island* met the



frigate *Niagara* off Southwest Pass, Monday August 19th, and furnished her with the usual supplies. About this time the Confederate cruiser *Sumter* in command of the famous Captain Raphael Semmes, was reported as being in the Gulf and there was great excitement in the Union squadron. Lieutenant Trenchard notes that "the *Powhatan* being still absent it is presumed that she has followed up the *Sumter*." On June 18th the *Sumter* had dropped down from New Orleans to the Head of the Passes and after waiting several weeks she made a bold dash for the bar and although hotly pursued by the blockading vessels she managed to escape. The chagrin of the Union Commander at the audacious escape of the *Sumter*, therefore, can well be imagined, so that when it was rumored that she was again in the vicinity, presumably after a successful cruise, the Union officers spared no trouble to insure her capture. The *Sumter* did not return to New Orleans, however, but continued to cruise in the West Indies and finally ran over to Gibraltar where she was blockaded by the *Kearsarge*, the *Tuscarora*, and the *Ino*.

Supplying the *Brooklyn*, the *St Louis*, and the *Mississippi* at the Passes of the Mississippi,



the *Rhode Island*, at 4 P.M., August 21st, sailed for Pensacola, where she arrived at 7 A.M. on the following morning, anchoring near the *Colorado*. Here the little supply-steamer performed a signal service for the Government. The *Wyandotte* had been detailed to blockade the Eastern Pass of the Mississippi, but it was found that the channel could easily be blocked by sinking a schooner, thus placing at the disposal of the Gulf squadron an additional warship. So great was the demand for war vessels at this time, that the addition of one vessel was a matter of no small importance. A schooner was secured at Pensacola and taking it in tow, the *Rhode Island* carried it to the Eastern Pass, where it was sunk, thus relieving the *Wyandotte* of that duty.

The *Rhode Island* then continued on her homeward voyage, supplying the *Montgomery* and the *Cuyler* at Appalachicola, the *Montauk* at St. Mark's, and falling in with the *Santee*, Captain Henry Eagle; the *Vincennes*, Commander Robert Handy; the *Preble*, Commander Henry French; the *Keystone State*, Commander Gustavus H. Scott; the *Crusader*, Commander Tunis A. M. Craven; and the *Water Witch*, Commander William Roncken-

dorff, at Key West. At this point Lieutenant Trenchard notes: "Thankful to have escaped the heavy gale experienced by all the vessels fallen in with."

Monday, August 26th, was spent by the *Rhode Island* at Key West in coaling and getting ready for sea, and on the following day she resumed her voyage for New York. On the 29th she arrived off the bar at Savannah, where she met the frigate *St. Lawrence*. While supplying this vessel with provisions a squall came up which delayed operations an hour. Continuing her course at 6.30 P.M., the *Rhode Island*, at midnight, made out the lights of the *Roanoke* off Charleston harbor and dropped anchor near her. After "calling on my friend, Commander Maxwell Woodhull, of the *Connecticut*," the sister ship of the *Rhode Island*, bound for the Gulf with fresh supplies, Lieutenant Trenchard resumed his course for New York.

When off Hatteras Inlet he found the *Monticello*, the *Harriet Lane*, the *Pawnee*, the *George Peabody*, and the *Cumberland*, and from the people in the last-named ship learned that the forts guarding the Inlet had been captured by the fleet under Flag-Officer Stringham on the

28th. Standing on to Cape Henry, the *Rhode Island*, at 3 P.M., spoke the sloop-of-war, *Dale*, Commander Edward M. Yard, and at 6 A.M., September 1st, communicated with the *Quaker City*. At 1.30 A.M. on the following day, the lookout reported the lights at Atlantic Highlands, and soon afterward the *Rhode Island* fell in with the United States frigate *Minnesota*. The *Rhode Island* arrived at the Brooklyn Navy Yard that day where the sick men who had been taken aboard from the different vessels of the blockading squadrons were landed.







## CHAPTER XI.

### VERY ACTIVE CRUISING.

LIEUTENANT TRENCHARD began his second trip South September 8th, touching at Hampton Roads, where he received despatches for Flag-Officer William Mervine and the following instructions from the Navy Department : " Upon the receipt of the public despatches from the Department, which will be delivered to you by a special messenger, you will proceed with the U. S. steamer *Rhode Island* direct to the Gulf of Mexico, reporting yourself to Commodore Mervine, and placing your vessel at his disposal. In the performance of this duty, your instructions will not be diverted or interfered with by any senior officer to yourself whom you may fall in with prior to meeting with Commodore Mervine." In getting under way again that evening the



*Rhode Island* lost her anchor and fifteen fathoms of chain. In the night a large Dutch steam frigate was spoken off Cape Henry, and at noon on the following day the United States sailing frigate *Potomac* was boarded. Late that afternoon the *Rhode Island* passed the United States steamer *Flag*, which was in full chase, after a suspicious-looking craft seaward. At dusk Lieutenant Trenchard made a large sail inshore, and on drawing nearer, the stranger suddenly fired a shot across the *Rhode Island's* bow. This startling summons to heave-to was promptly obeyed as it was evident that the little *Rhode Island* was in the presence of a powerful warship. A few minutes later a boat ran alongside and an officer stepped aboard announcing that his ship was the United States steam-frigate *Susquehanna*. The Union squadrons had been unusually vigilant as several blockade runners recently had succeeded in eluding our ships, and our officers did not propose to have it repeated ; hence the summary call on the *Rhode Island* to heave-to. At nine o'clock that evening a sail was made out directly ahead which proved to be a prize schooner taken by the United States steamer *Cambridge*.

Continuing her course southward the *Rhode*

*Island* at 9.45 o'clock the following morning, September 15th, passed Carrysford Reef Light, and hoisting her colors fired a gun. This was promptly answered by a display of the Stars and Stripes from the top of the lighthouse. The brief reference to this episode in Lieutenant Trenchard's journal is full of meaning to seamen and lighthouse-keepers. It would be difficult to imagine a life more lonely than that of a lighthouse-keeper on a reef far out at sea. At the same time no sight brings greater joy to the sailor than that of the trusty watch-tower rising out of the waste of waters giving warning of dangerous shoals. Simple as the interchange of courtesies between the *Rhode Island* and the lighthouse-keeper on Carrysford Reef had been it was a source of deep satisfaction on both sides: to the keeper to see some evidences of human life, and more particularly to know that Old Glory was still floating on the high seas (for the exaggerated reports of the war that had reached him from Southern sources tended to the belief that the Confederate ironclads and commerce destroyers would sweep the Stars and Stripes from the ocean); and to the people in the *Rhode Island*, because it was proof that in the light-

house on which mariners so much depended, "All was well." Early that same evening the *Rhode Island* made the Sombrero Lighthouse and the same courtesies were exchanged, the keeper displaying the Stars and Stripes from the top of the white tower, while the *Rhode Island* saluted.

At 7.40 P.M. the *Rhode Island* stopped her engines and fired a gun and a rocket for a pilot. She also used night-signals made with costons and her distinguishing number with lanterns. Major French, U. S. A. put a pilot on board and soon afterward followed in person. Lieutenant Trenchard dined with Captain Breese, and the officers at Fort Taylor on Monday, September 16th, and on the following day got under way for Pensacola making that fort shortly after daylight September 19th. Here he learned of the gallant attack on the Confederate privateer *Judah* in the harbor of Pensacola which was led by Lieutenant John Henry Russell, afterward Rear-Admiral.

Never stopping more than a few hours in her hasty voyages the *Rhode Island* left Pensacola on the day of her arrival, and soon after daylight, September 20th, made the *Richmond*,



the *Vincennes* and the *Water Witch* at anchor off Pass á l'outré. These vessels were making preparations to occupy the Head of the Passes. Running down to Southwest Pass where she found the *Niagara*, the *Rhode Island* began her return trip, arriving at Pensacola September 21st. At this place Flag-Officer Mervine desiring to visit Flag-Officer McKean at the Head of the Passes, transferred his flag from the great frigate *Colorado* to the *Rhode Island*, thus raising the staunch little steamer to the unexpected dignity of a flagship. The ceremony of transferring the flag was attended with a good deal of pomp. The crews of the two vessels manned the yards, the seamen put on their best uniforms, the officers donned their full dress and side arms, while the guns of the ships thundered out salutes. Running down to the Passes of the Mississippi, Flag-Officer Mervine exchanged salutes with Flag-Officer McKean in the *Niagara*, while Captain Polk of the *Richmond* was ordered aboard the *Rhode Island* and held a conference with Flag-Officer Mervine; probably relative to the proposed occupation at the Head of the Passes.

Some excitement was afforded at this place by a Confederate steamer coming down the



river: apparently with the intention of running the blockade, Lieutenant Trenchard sent his men to quarters, cleared the guns, and gave chase; but the Confederates retired up the river before the *Rhode Island* could get within gun-shot.

On the evening of September 24th when the *Rhode Island* was well on her return trip to New York, a stranger was discovered off the starboard bow. The *Rhode Island* made the proper night-signals, but on observing them the stranger instantly put out all her lights and made every effort to escape. This confirmed Lieutenant Trenchard in the belief that he was on the track of one of the Confederate cruisers and, darkening his lights also, he ordered full speed in the direction the stranger had taken when last seen. But in spite of every effort to keep the vessel in sight she was soon lost to view, as the night was unusually dark and there were frequent squalls of rain.

Passing Sand Key Light at midnight the *Rhode Island*, on the following day, boarded the mail steamer *Marion* from Havana bound for New York, and spoke the English brig *Cognomen* from Cienfuegos for Boston. While off

the Delaware the *Rhode Island* passed her sister ship the supply-steamer *Connecticut* which was just starting out on her second trip South. The *Rhode Island* arrived at the Brooklyn Navy Yard September 29th.

The first two trips South showed Lieutenant Trenchard that there was a great demand for ice among the vessels he supplied, and on his return North from his second trip he remained two weeks at the navy yard having the *Rhode Island's* ice-house enlarged. This work being completed, he, for the third time, turned southward on his supply mission, having on board as a passenger Mr. Robert W. Shufeldt, the United States Consul General at Havana. This gentleman had been a lieutenant in the United States Navy, but resigned before the war broke out and commanded one of the Collins line of steamers running to Liverpool. In May, 1863, he again received a commission in the Navy and commanded the *Conemaugh*; afterward he became a rear-admiral. At this time the project of erecting a fort at the Head of the Passes in the Mississippi River was under way, and the *Rhode Island*, stopping at Hampton Roads, October 14th, by order of the Secretary of the Navy, took aboard a rifled

80-pounder and a quantity of ammunition for this battery. But the unfortunate termination of the "affair of the Passes" in which the comparatively harmless ram *Manassas*, with a few river boats, frightened off the Union Squadron, rendered the transportation of this gun unnecessary.

Taking aboard a number of officers who desired to join their ships in the blockading squadrons, and having a quantity of ammunition aboard for the *Monticello*, Lieutenant Trenchard left Hampton Roads October 15th. Thirty miles south of Cape Henry he boarded the ship *Isabel* of and for Baltimore, from Rotterdam. Falling in with and supplying the United States steamer *Cambridge* with fresh provisions near Cape Fear River, the *Jamestown*, the *Young Rover*, and the *Gemsbock*, October 17th, the *Rhode Island* spoke the English bark *Elizabeth* of Liverpool, and on October 18th, gave the ships *Sabine*, *Roanoke*, *Flag*, and *Monticello* the usual supplies near Charleston, and the *Savannah* off Savannah.

Passing rapidly southward, Lieutenant Trenchard boarded the English brig *Rosita*, October 21st, and finding that she was laden with mahogany for London, allowed her to proceed.



After coaling all night from the United States ship *Fearnaught* at Key West, the *Rhode Island*, at 6.30 A.M., October 24th, hastened on her way to St. Marks, boarding the American schooner *Aristides* of Key West on the way. This vessel had a permit from the commanding naval officer to fish in Florida Bay, but as she was one hundred and eighty miles from that place, and was coming from the direction of Tampa Bay, standing toward Apalachicola, Lieutenant Trenchard deemed the circumstances suspicious, and seizing her, sent her to Key West in charge of Master's-Mate Thatcher, and a prize crew for adjudication. No final decree was rendered in the *Aristides's* case, but it mattered little as the amount distributed would have been about \$60 among the officers and crew after deducting expenses.

The *Rhode Island* supplied the *Montauk* off St. Marks October 26th, and while endeavoring to do the same for the *Marion*, the two steamers came in collision and both narrowly escaped sinking. As it was, the *Rhode Island* carried away two of the *Marion's* stern boats. The accident was caused by the steamer being so much out of trim that her rudder was almost out of the water and scarcely affected



her course. Leaving a boat to replace one that he had destroyed, Lieutenant Trenchard sailed for Appalachicola, supplying the *Montgomery en route*.

On the arrival of the *Rhode Island* at Pensacola, the Union forces were found to be preparing to resist a night attack which it was thought the Confederates would make. Captain Bailey, the senior naval officer present, ordered the *Rhode Island* to run to the east, along Santa Rosa Island within a mile of the beach, so as to prevent the landing of Confederate troops at that point. The order was faithfully carried out. The crew of the *Rhode Island* remained in quarters all night, and everything was kept in readiness for immediate action. At daylight, October 28th, Lieutenant Trenchard returned to the anchorage and after supplying the *Colorado* left for Mobile, arriving there at four o'clock that afternoon.

Speeding along her course in the Gulf, the *Rhode Island* supplied the squadron off the Passes of the Mississippi. From the *Niagara*, which had just returned from Japan on a diplomatic cruise when the war broke out, Lieutenant Trenchard took aboard thirty-three boxes containing presents from the Japanese

Government to the United States. While running from Galveston to Ship Island on her return trip, the *Rhode Island*, on November 2d, being diverted from her course by a strong northerly current, struck on Trinity Shoal. Fortunately, the engines had been stopped a few minutes before in order to take soundings so that the shock was slight and did no serious injury.

While off the Southwest Pass another accident caused Lieutenant Trenchard great anxiety. Soon after dark, November 3d, a boat with the paymaster's clerk in it put off from the *Rhode Island* for the *Niagara* for the purpose of obtaining receipts for the supplies furnished that vessel. The night was exceedingly dark, and owing to the great strength of the wind and the tide the boat was carried out to sea in spite of every exertion of her crew. As soon as the craft shoved off from the *Rhode Island* Lieutenant Trenchard noticed that it drifted astern at a dangerously swift rate, and his fears for the safety of his men were at once aroused. Waiting until eight o'clock, when the boat ought to have returned, and learning nothing of its fate Lieutenant Trenchard got the *Rhode Island* under way, and running up to the *Niagara*,

inquired if the boat had reached that ship. Learning that it had not, his anxiety was doubled and he ordered the vessel to steam out to sea in the direction in which the wind and tide probably had carried the missing boat.

All night long the *Rhode Island* steamed back and forth over the dark boisterous sea, burning coston signal lights in hopes of discovering her missing men. When day broke the horizon was anxiously scanned, but only a dreary waste of yellowish water greeted the eye on one side, and the low sandy shores on the other. Thinking that the boat might have regained the anchorage in the night, Lieutenant Trenchard hastened back to the *Niagara*, but learning that nothing had been seen of it he again put out to sea, this time going farther out than he did the night before. But all to no purpose. The men, apparently had been lost. "But at half past three in the afternoon," wrote Lieutenant Trenchard, "my heart was gladdened by the report of a gun to attract our attention. We took the hint and returned. I was overjoyed to find that the boat had been discovered inside of our track, and a boat was sent to her relief and brought



alongside of the *Niagara*. I feel indeed truly thankful that the boat's crew and officers had returned in safety. The men had spent the night buffeting the waves, endeavoring to regain their ship."

Touching at the Gulf ports in the same order in which she came, the *Rhode Island*, on November 6th, while at Pensacola, took aboard a number of invalids, and twenty-four prisoners from Fort Pickens, who were to be carried North. A number of passengers also, were aboard, including Lieutenants Russell and Selden of the *Colorado*, and Lieutenant-Colonel Creighton with other officers of the Sixth New York Regiment. At Dog Island, Lieut. G. W. Doty left the *Rhode Island* to relieve Lieutenant Bryant of the *Marion*, the latter taking passage in the *Rhode Island*. A number of Navy and Army officers took passage in the *Rhode Island* on this trip, among whom were General French and Lieut. John Tattnall of the Marine Corps. Among the Army officers was the famous "Colonel" Billy Wilson and staff, of the Zouaves. On leaving the ship the "Colonel" presented Lieutenant Trenchard with a gorgeous chromo representing the Zouave commander in full uniform,



with a camp of the "Zoo-Zoos" in the back-ground. Leaving Key West, November 11th, the *Rhode Island* made Carrysford Reef Light early on the following morning, and boarded a Spanish brig and the American brig *Mountain Eagle*, and spoke the United States steamer *Hatteras*, and the British war steamer *Steady*.

At 3.30 P.M., November 13th, while speaking the bark *Kate Lincoln*, under English colors, off St. John's Bar, Lieutenant Trenchard sighted and gave chase to a suspicious-looking schooner that, apparently, was endeavoring to get into the port. The *Rhode Island* gained rapidly, and observing the danger the chase was in, a Confederate steamer ran out to assist her. Upon this Lieutenant Trenchard trained one of his 8-inch guns on the steamer and fired with such accuracy that on the third shot the steamer put back to cover. Meantime, the schooner had succeeded in crossing the bar. The *Rhode Island* followed as far as the shoaling water would admit, and then heaving-to fired rapidly at the two vessels, as long as they were within reach of her guns.

Touching at Fernandina and St. Simon's without finding a vessel there the *Rhode Is-*

*land* headed northward, and after supplying the *Savannah* and the *Augusta* off Savannah, she visited the Union fleet at Port Royal, where Lieutenant Trenchard went aboard the *Wabash* to offer his congratulations to Flag-Officer Samuel Francis Dupont for his brilliant victory in capturing that important seaport. Commenting on the bombardment of Forts Walker and Beauregard, Lieutenant Trenchard says : " Flag-Officer Dupont deserves the highest degree of credit for the manner in which the attack was conducted and which resulted in so glorious a victory. My best wishes attend the success of this accomplished officer and his gallant command. I dined with the Flag-Officer and my old friends Capt. Charles H. Davis, Capt. C. R. P. Rogers, together with General French. After dinner we all went on shore and walked over the works at Hilton Head, to witness the effect of the shot and shell. The dismounted guns, shattered carriages and torn-up earth impressed us fully how roughly these works had been handled."

Complying with orders to take on board the officers and crew of the steamer *Governor*, which had foundered in the terrific gale, while

on her way to Port Royal, Lieutenant Trenchard left that place November 15th. He spoke the United States cruiser *Alabama*, and the *Susquehanna* off Charleston. Continuing northward he made Cape Hatteras Light at daybreak, November 16th. Off this point one of the invalid seamen, named Richard Tyrell (who had been taken aboard from the *Potomac*), in a moment of delirium jumped overboard. In an instant the dreaded cry, "Man overboard!" resounded through the ship. The engines were stopped and reversed, the helm put hard a-port, the life buoy was cut away and a boat was lowered. But after a long search no trace of the man could be found. As he had jumped from one of the forward ports it was thought that the paddle-wheel had struck and killed him instantly. Only a few days before Tyrell had made an attempt to kill himself by gashing his arm with a knife.

Stopping at Hampton Roads for a few hours the *Rhode Island* again put to sea, arriving in New York, November 19th. Lieutenant Trenchard notes that while passing up the Narrows, his vessel was "boarded by the Health Officer and the Associated Press for



news." The next day the *Rhode Island* ran into the Navy Yard, where Lieutenant Trenchard witnessed the launch of the *Oneida*. The sick and invalids were transferred to the Naval Hospital, while the United States Marshal came aboard and took possession of the Confederate Lieutenants, Cooper and Farley, with twenty-three privates who had been captured by the Union forces on Santa Rosa Island, near Pensacola.







## CHAPTER XII.

### ON THE ENEMY'S COAST.

THE *Rhode Island* in her first three trips South had proved herself to be such a fast and efficient vessel that the Navy Department determined to increase her armament and while she remained in the Navy Yard, November 20th to December 5th, 1861, two 8-inch guns and a 30-pounder Parrott gun were placed aboard her. On December 5th, having received her allowance of powder, she sailed from New York with the usual supplies for the blockading squadrons, taking aboard a 9-inch gun at Hampton Roads for the *Pawnee* and a gun carriage for the *Pocahontas*.

At eight o'clock on the evening of December 8th, just after she had passed Hatteras Inlet, she boarded the British schooner *Phantom*, laden with sugar and molasses from St. Johns,

Antigua, for New York. As this vessel had been boarded only the day before by the United States warship *Mount Vernon*, and was warned off the coast, Lieutenant Trenchard decided to seize her and turn her over to the blockading squadron off Beaufort. Arriving off this place December 9th, it was decided to release the *Phantom*, and after supplying several steamers with provisions, he sailed again that day with the *Phantom* in tow, casting her off twenty-four miles south of Beaufort. The barks *Armanda* and *Gem*, and the frigate *Sabine* off Georgetown, S. C., were supplied and the United States transport *L. R. Spaulding*, bound for Port Royal with troops, was spoken December 10th.

While approaching Charleston at 3.30 A.M. the following day the people of the *Rhode Island* were startled by the report of guns. Believing that some battle was in progress, Lieutenant Trenchard cleared for action, sent his men to quarters, and cautiously drew near the bar. Exchanging signals with the blockading squadron, he communicated with the *Augusta*, the *Roebuck*, the *Florida*, and the *Alabama*. The guns which had so alarmed the *Rhode Island's* crew were found to have

been fired by Fort Sumter "in commemoration of some rebel rejoicing."

Getting under way for Port Royal the *Rhode Island*, on December 11th, passed the English warship *Racer*, bound for New York. Supplying the flagship *Wabash* at Port Royal, the *Rhode Island*, while endeavoring to steam out of that harbor in the evening, when it was too dark to distinguish the buoys, got out of the channel and touched bottom. Checking his course, Lieutenant Trenchard backed toward the channel, as nearly as he could judge, and anchored. As there were only four fathoms of water on either side it was decided to wait until daybreak and the fires were banked. But the wind, which had been light during the afternoon, suddenly shifted to the northeast and by half past eleven o'clock it was blowing half a gale, which together with the shallow water and the darkness made the *Rhode Island's* position extremely perilous. Realizing his danger, Lieutenant Trenchard ordered a full head of steam, but before this had been accomplished his cable parted. Promptly dropping his port anchor, he brought the head of his ship to, but that chain also snapped the moment it felt the strain.



All this time the ship was drifting among the dangerous shoals and occasionally, when the recession of an unusually heavy wave caused her to dip lower than usual, her keel would strike bottom with a shock that promised to shake her to pieces in a short time. Fortunately the engineer soon got up a full head of steam and gathered headway, finally enabling the ship to regain deep water, although she struck bottom a number of times before this could be done.

After her narrow escape from shipwreck at Port Royal, the *Rhode Island* hastened southward and on December 14th boarded the American schooner *Greenland*, from Havana for Philadelphia, laden with fruit. Several other American and English vessels also were boarded. One of these was the English schooner *Julia* from Port au Platte. From her master Lieutenant Trenchard learned that information had reached Havana of the *Sumter* being at Kingston, St. Vincent's Island, West Indies, and was blocked by the *Iroquois*. From the other vessels coming from Havana, Lieutenant Trenchard learned that two schooners and a steamer laden with cotton and rice had run the blockade at New Orleans and arrived



at Havana in safety under Confederate colors.

After speaking the bark *Citizen* from Aspinwall for New York the *Rhode Island*, on the afternoon of December 15th, while off Carrysford Reef, boarded the English brig *Alteta*, from Matanzas to Baltimore, whose master reported that a Confederate schooner flying the English flag had left Matanzas without "register or clearance." The *Rhode Island* reached Key West December 17th, where she spent several days coaling and repairing her machinery. During this time Lieutenant Trenchard notes that he dined with Judge Marvin's family, and that a number of ladies and gentlemen, including the Rev. and Mrs. Herrick, Miss Johnson, Miss Haley, and Miss Pinckney of Key West, took tea aboard the *Rhode Island*.

Leaving the *Richmond*, the *Wanderer*, and the *Guard* at this place, the *Rhode Island*, on December 20th, supplied the United States ship *Ethan Allen* at Tampa, and the steamer *Montauk* at St. Marks, and the *Marion* and the *Hatteras* at Appalachicola, where Lieutenant Trenchard notes "Young Etting, who had come out with me, left the ship to join

Captain Doty as his clerk. Paymaster Gilman [lately Pay Director of the United States Navy], late of the *Marion*, joined this vessel for passage to the *Santee*." At Pensacola the *Rhode Island* supplied the *South Carolina* and the *Cuyler*; at Mobile the *Potomac* and the *Huntsville*, and at Ship Island and mouths of the Mississippi, the *Niagara*, the *Preble*, the *Water Witch*, the *New London*, the *Massachusetts*, the *Wissahickon*, the *Pampero*, the *Mississippi*, the *Kingfisher*, and the *Vincennes*. At Northeast Pass, Lieutenant Trenchard notes, "Received from the *Vincennes* Lieutenant Clark, to join the *Santee*, and Acting Master Davis, an invalid for home."

Christmas, 1861, in the Gulf of Mexico was a bright, mild and pleasant day. Two hours after midnight, the *Rhode Island* fell in with the *Colorado*, at anchor off Southwest Pass, and furnished her with the usual supplies of fresh provisions, letters, papers, etc., which were most acceptable Christmas gifts. The cold comforts of a Christmas at sea, off a hostile coast, and thousands of miles from loved ones at home, was made doubly disagreeable aboard the *Rhode Island* this year by her narrowly escaping shipwreck. She met the

United States steamer *De Soto* off Barataria at 10.20 A.M. and gave her the usual supplies, and then hastened on her errand of good cheer. When off the Light on Ship Island Shoal at 4.15 that afternoon, she struck bottom. The shock was felt by everyone in the vessel and fears of a serious disaster were entertained. The accident was the fault of no one aboard, for at the time the light-house was fully seven miles away and according to the latest charts there was plenty of water for the vessel on the course the ship had been holding. The ever-shifting sands in this part of the Gulf, however, made navigation within sight of land always a risky undertaking, and the navigators in the *Rhode Island* found it so on more than one occasion. Fortunately, immediately after touching, the *Rhode Island* ran into deep water and, standing out to sea, she got into safe quarters again. Just before and after she touched, the lead showed five fathoms.

On the following day, December 26th, there was an exciting chase and capture. Early in the morning, while in Latitude 28° north, and Longitude 93° 15' west, a sail was discovered, and the steamer was promptly headed toward



it. There was nothing unusual in sighting a vessel in that part of the Gulf, but the instructions of the Department, to speak to every craft sighted, were imperative. As the *Rhode Island* gained upon the stranger, it was seen that she was a schooner, and from her extraordinary efforts to increase her speed the belief prevailed that she was a Confederate blockade-runner. The *Rhode Island* was cleared for action, and the men were sent to quarters. In a short time the Union vessel ran alongside of the schooner, and firing a shot across her bow gave her the order to heave-to. This was done with evident reluctance on the part of the stranger's people, and on boarding she was found to be the Confederate schooner *Venus*, from Point Isabel, Texas, bound for Franklin, Va., laden with lead, copper, tin, and wool. The commander and crew of the *Venus* were transferred to the *Rhode Island*, and a prize crew under the command of Master William Williams being sent aboard, the *Venus* was ordered to Ship Island.

That night, the weather being heavy, the *Rhode Island* circled round and round until daylight, when she put into Galveston and supplied the *Santee* and the bark *Midnight*.



Lieutenant John E. Hart, Paymaster Augustus H. Gilman, Acting Master Rogers, and Midshipman Miller were put aboard the former, and Lieutenant James Edward Jouett [the present Rear-Admiral Jouett] came aboard as a passenger to join their ship, the *Montgomery*, which was met the following day, when Commander T. Danah Shaw and Lieut. Charles Hunter came on board as passengers.

While in sight of Ship Island, on her return trip, Lieutenant Trenchard notes that he met the *De Soto*, towing the French war-steamer *Nidan*: "that she had accidentally got a-foul of and injured very badly." At Pensacola the *Rhode Island* received on board, as passengers, Commander James Alden, Lieutenant Samuel R. Knox, several officers from the *Cuyler*, six Confederate deserters, and six discharged Union soldiers. At this time Fort Pickens was keeping up an animated fire on a small Confederate steamer near the Navy Yard, which had ventured within range. The Confederate batteries promptly responded, and for a few minutes there was a lively but harmless cannonading.

Touching at the usual ports, the *Rhode Island* supplied the vessels at those points

and arrived at Key West, January 6, 1862. While at Tampa, two days before, Felix McCann, a seaman who had lost his mind by sickness, jumped overboard, but a boat-party being promptly lowered, he was rescued. From Key West the *Rhode Island* made her way rapidly North, supplying the *Bienville*, off St. John's Bar, her commander, Captain Steedman, breakfasting with Lieutenant Trenchard.

Stopping at Port Royal, Lieutenant Trenchard called on Flag-Officer Dupont, and then went on shore to visit the fort on Hilton Head. After enjoying the magnificent view afforded at this point, Lieutenant Trenchard visited the little church and the cemetery, and remarked on the "horrid acts of vandalism, its desecration by tearing up its pews and breaking in a tomb, and its sad appearance." While at this place the *Rhode Island's* sister ship, the *Connecticut*, Capt. Maxwell Woodhull, arrived on her trip South.

Continuing northward, the *Rhode Island* passed a number of Union warships from which she took mails. At Hampton Roads she met the venerable frigate *Constitution*, which came into port with two thousand soldiers aboard, who on passing the *Rhode Island*

gave three hearty cheers. Thus, even in her old age, grand *Old Ironsides* showed that she had not outlived her usefulness. Trenchard's experiences with the *Constitution* had been of the most agreeable nature. It was on August 6, 1838, while at Pensacola, that he received from Captain James McIntosh, then commanding the historic frigate, the following letter of dismissal: "It affords me pleasure to bear testimony to your correct and gentlemanly deportment while under my command, and you have my best wishes for your safe return to your friends, and for your advancement in your professional pursuits." Ten years later young Trenchard was one of the survivors of the surveying vessel *Washington*, wrecked on the coast of North Carolina in 1846, and was rescued by the *Constitution*. Some of the men wounded in the battle of Bull Run were brought aboard the *Rhode Island* for transportation North. Among them were Dr. King, of Newport, and his son, just graduated from college, who had enlisted as a private in Sprague's R. I. artillery. Instead of going to New York this trip, the *Rhode Island* made for Philadelphia. William E. Jackson was the pilot whom Lieutenant Trenchard took aboard



at Cape Henlopen. Off Newcastle, the engines were stopped so as to give time for sheathing the bow, as a protection against the ice which filled the river at that time.

It is difficult for men having permanent homes, and whose occupations do not require prolonged absences, to appreciate the joy attending a sailor's return from a voyage and finding his family safe and well, especially when he has been exposed not only to the perils of the sea, but to the attacks of a daring and skilful enemy. No harm can be done at this late day in divulging one of the secrets of the naval service during the Civil War. It has been a rule of long standing, that no officer in his private correspondence shall divulge the important occurrences that take place aboard his vessel, or give information of her intended movements. This rule was rigidly enforced during the Civil War, as newspaper correspondents swarmed everywhere, and its strict observance would have prevented our officers from informing their families at which port the ship would stop on their return trip.

The vessels of the United States Navy returning North from 1861-1865 remained in port only a short time, and were hurried off to



sea, so that a few days meant a great deal to them. Some of the officers, whose names will not be mentioned, evaded this rule in a harmless way by a secret code with their families. For instance, when the officer learned that his ship was to return to Boston, instead of New York (the port from which they sailed, they telegraphed to their families at the first opportunity the seemingly insignificant dispatch, "All's well." But in the family code it read: "Our ship will return to Boston. Be there when we arrive." Or, if Philadelphia was to be the return port, the message might have been, "In best of health," which being interpreted meant, "Go to Philadelphia."

It has not been said that Lieutenant Trenchard employed such a code, but the *Rhode Island* left New York on this trip South December 5, 1861, and when she reached the Navy Yard at Philadelphia, January 17, 1862, on her return trip we find the fact recorded in Lieutenant Trenchard's journal, as follows: "Reached the Navy Yard at Philadelphia at 4 P.M. and took tea at home, and finding all well, for which and my safe return to them I feel more grateful to the Kind Giver of all good things than I am able to express, and I

think each returning voyage should re-awaken in me thanksgiving and praise for continued blessings and favors."

The care taken by the Government during the war to keep the movements of its vessels secret, was shown when the *Rhode Island* was at Philadelphia. Several Union vessels were captured in the course of the war by daring bands of Confederates who had learned of their intended movements. The capture of the *Rhode Island*, with her invaluable cargo of fresh provisions, would have been a more serious loss to the blockading squadrons than the capture of one of the gunboats. The Government at first was to a considerable extent suspicious of its own men. The news of more than one important expedition had been forwarded to the leaders of the Confederacy by some traitor wearing the blue, and the department was constantly in fear of a repetition of this treachery. With a view of throwing such miscreants off the scent, orders were telegraphed to the *Rhode Island*, January 17, 1862, to sail for Boston, but on the following day the orders were secretly revoked, and on February 5th, Lieutenant Trenchard began his fifth trip South. Rear Admiral Dupont followed this

up with this note : " You will not mention your destination or its object to any one on your ship or to any one off Charleston, as I desire it should not be known to any one but the Senior officer present."

The minute care with which his instructions were made out showed how important the Government considered the service. On February 1st the following orders were sent to Lieutenant Trenchard :

" FEBRUARY 1, 1862.

" On your next trip you will supply all vessels belonging to the North and South Atlantic, and Gulf-blockaded squadrons which you may fall in with south of Cape Hatteras, giving them such stores as they may need in moderate quantities, and will furnish fresh beef and vegetables for their officers and men, not exceeding a three days' supply going out. After supplying the last vessel on the outward trip, the paymaster will estimate the quantity of fresh beef and vegetables remaining, and the commanding officer will direct the same to be apportioned and delivered as equally as possible to the different vessels which will probably need supplies on the return trip. Moderate quantities of ice may be furnished the vessels



without charge, care being taken that sufficient be kept to preserve the beef. The bread in your cargo will be issued to vessels needing it, but not landed until your return to Key West.

H. BRIDGE, *Chief of the Bureau.*"

The *Rhode Island* left Philadelphia, February 5th, with a larger supply of provisions than usual. Touching at Hampton Roads and Hatteras Inlet she, on the night of February 8th, while near Ocracoke Inlet, began firing rockets and burning night-signals which were finally answered by the United States steamer *State of Georgia*, which vessel was supplied with fresh provisions. The United States bark *Restless* was supplied off Bull's Bay, February 10th, and at noon the squadron blockading Charleston received its quota of fresh provisions. On the same day chase was given to a suspicious sail, but on boarding it was found to be the schooner *Bell Peck* from Hilton Head for New York in ballast. While at Port Royal Lieutenant Trenchard notes that besides supplying the *Florida*, the *Susquehanna* and the *Mohican*, he also furnished "the marine battalion with fresh provisions."

As the *Rhode Island* was leaving Stono



Inlet on the night of February 12th, a sail was discovered on the port tack, standing for the land. Lieutenant Trenchard notes: "As the stranger was off the inlet at the time, it was reasonable to suppose that the vessel was attempting to run the blockade. We promptly gave chase and steamed up to the highest point consistent with safety. Finding that the steamer was gaining on her but slowly, the schooner, after half an hour, was fired at from one of our forward guns with the intention of bringing her to. This had the desired effect, for she tacked, showed her light and stood for us. Upon boarding her, she proved to be the United States ship *Onward* attached to the blockade off Saint Simons. She should have run for us soon as we hove in sight instead of running away; an extraordinary way of conducting operations! Her commander threatened, that if we had fired another shot he would have returned it." Lieutenant Trenchard concludes rather testily "he declined receiving supplies." On the following day the *Rhode Island* fell in with and supplied the United States steamer *Bienville*. Commander Charles Steedman came aboard the *Rhode Island* and breakfasted with Lieutenant Trenchard and

also reported, "having been compelled to fire a shot to get the *Onward* to come within communicating distance only a day or two ago."

Among other vessels boarded by the *Rhode Island* at this point and at Key West was the steamer *Saxon* off Carrysford Reef from the Charleston Navy Yard laden with Government stores bound for Ship Island. February 17th was spent at Key West, and being the anniversary of Lieutenant Trenchard's wife's birthday, he celebrated the occasion by giving a dinner-party aboard his ship. At eight o'clock in the evening, February 19th, the *Rhode Island* anchored off Cedar Keys. Rockets were sent up, a gun was fired, coston signals were burned, the *Rhode Island's* number, 333, was displayed, and everything was done to attract the attention of the blockading vessels. The signal was answered, but no other demonstration was made.

A few extracts from the journal will give an idea of this service.

Lieutenant Trenchard notes:

" THURSDAY, February 20, 1862.

"Squally weather, with occasional showers of rain, with thick weather during the early

part of the day. Latter part more pleasant. Got under way, and stood nearer in-shore. Discovered the United States steamer *Tacoma* at anchor in-shore of us, and at meridian Lieutenant Crossman and Mr. Potter came out with two boats to receive their supplies, and then returned, taking Mr. Hennessy, paymaster, who came out to join the *Tacoma*. At 2.40 P.M. got under way for St. Marks."

" FRIDAY, February 21, 1862.

"Wind from the north and east and cloudy, with rain during the night. At 12.40 A.M. anchored off St. Marks, and sent up two rockets which were not answered. Got under way soon after daylight, and made the United States steamer *Montauk*. Stood for her, and reached her at 7.20 A.M., and soon afterward supplied her and stood for Dog Island, anchoring off there at 1 P.M. The United States steamer *Sagamore* came out. At 2.10 P.M. supplied her, and at 3 P.M. left for Appalachicola, arriving here at 7 P.M. Made fast to the United States ship *Marion*; supplied her as well as a bark. Gave the *Marion* one of our quarter boats, and left at 9.50 P.M."

The *Rhode Island* arrived off Pensacola February 22d, when she, with the other Union



ships off that port, fired a salute in honor of Washington's Birthday. The next day she arrived at Ship Island, and anchored near the *Hartford*, Lieutenant Trenchard calling on Flag-Officer Farragut and Flag-Officer William B. McKean. The Union squadron at this place consisted of the *Hartford*, the *Niagara*, the *New London*, the *Nightingale*, the *South Carolina*, the *Water Witch*, the *Pampiro*, and the *Sciota*. The *Rhode Island* took on board the cargo of the prize schooner *I. G. McNeil*, which consisted of tobacco and coffee.

At 4.50 A.M., the people in the Union fleet discovered a schooner which, from her peculiar action, was thought to be a blockade runner.

Lieutenant Trenchard notes: "We made the schooner on the port quarter, apparently running out from the Pass. We got under way as rapidly as possible and gave chase, losing sight of her for a time, but regaining it soon after daylight in-shore of us. The *Winnona* also joined in the pursuit of the schooner. The *Brooklyn* had got under way, and was directed by signal to chase to the east. The order was at once obeyed. But the chase proved to be a tender attached to the squadron called the *Guard*."



While passing Galveston on the night of February 27th, the gallant Rhode Islanders were again thrown into a fever of anticipated battle by the discovery of lights in-shore of them, "like those of a steamer." The men were quickly sent to quarters, and every preparation was made to add another to the long list of glorious naval victories for the Stars and Stripes. But, on closer examination, the Rhode Islanders were chagrined on finding out that the lights were not those of a steamer at all, but were beacon-lights on shore.

Taking aboard some prisoners from the United States barks, *Arthur* and *Midnight*, off Aransas Pass, February 28th, the *Rhode Island* continued on her course for the Rio Grande, arriving there on the evening of the same day, and finding the United States sloop-of-war *Portsmouth* on guard. This was the longest trip the supply-steamer had yet made, having covered three thousand miles in her passage from New York and skirting the entire sea-coast of the rebelling States.

Taking on board seventeen prisoners, two invalids, a quantity of sugar and tobacco which the *Portsmouth* had captured, the *Rhode Island* began her return voyage March 1st. Keeping

the Texan coast from three to five miles distant, the steamer touched at Galveston, Sabine Pass, and on March 3d supplied the *Hatteras*, Commander George F. Emmons. On the next day a number of prisoners were taken aboard from the *De Soto*. The usual supplies were furnished to the blockading squadrons off the Passes of the Mississippi.

Off Ship Island Lieutenant Trenchard notes: "The remains of the late Paymaster, Charles E. Hammond, of the *Sciota*, were brought on board to be taken home. This gentleman was accidentally killed by his revolver going off in his own hands, inflicting a wound which proved to be fatal. The death of this estimable gentleman has been greatly deplored by all who knew him, and to whom he had warmly attached himself by his true piety and manliness of character." Under the same date Lieutenant Trenchard notes: "Paid a visit to my friend, Commander James Alden, of the *Richmond*, and met Lieutenant Charles Hunter, who came out in the *Richmond* to join the *Montgomery*."

Off Pensacola the *Rhode Island* supplied the *Mississippi* and received the mails from Fort Pickens. Shortly after midnight, March 13th,

just after the *Rhode Island* had left Key West north bound, she spoke the schooner *Nar-ragansett* of Fall River from Philadelphia with coal, and at daybreak the bark *R. R. Walker*, of Boston, nine days from Cienfuegos for New York laden with sugar, and the British brig *Ann Johnson* of and for Greenock from Matanzas.

While endeavoring to run into Fernandina, March 14th, the *Rhode Island* ran aground but soon afterward succeeded in getting off. She then dropped anchor, but in swinging around in the strong tide the ship came about with so much force that the shoe of the fore foot was carried away. Early on the morning of March 15th, Lieutenant Trenchard breakfasted with Flag-Officer Dupont aboard the *Wabash* at St. Augustine. On the same day John Crawford an ordinary seaman of the *Rhode Island* died. Funeral services were held over his remains the next day when the ship reached Hampton Roads where they were taken ashore and buried. Touching at Port Royal, where she took aboard the mails, the *Rhode Island* passed Cape Hatteras, March 17th, and arrived at Hampton Roads eight days after the fearful experience of the Union fleet with the ironclad *Merrimac*.



The following were the officers of the *Rhode Island* in 1862 :

Commander, Stephen Decatur Trenchard ;  
Acting Masters, William Williams, T. N. Myer ;  
Acting Ensigns, Samuel H. Field, Albert  
Taylor ; Paymaster, Richard Hall Douglass ;  
Assistant Surgeon, Samuel G. Webb ; Acting  
First Assistant Engineer, John F. McCutchen ;  
Acting Third Assistant Engineer, George H.  
Rutter ; Engineers, Joseph C. Lavis, Green-  
ville Lavis, Anthony French, Isaac C. Marsh ;  
Acting Masters' Mates, E. W. Watson, Lemuel  
Pope, William H. H. Stevens, Daniel R.  
Brown, and William Rogers ; Captain's Clerk,  
F. C. T. Beck ; Paymaster's Clerk, Frank H.  
Deal.







## CHAPTER XIII.

### AN EXPERIENCE WITH THE "MERRIMAC."

IT was on her sixth trip South that the *Rhode Island* had an exciting experience with the famous Confederate ironclad *Merrimac*. The *Rhode Island* left Philadelphia April 5th, arriving at Hampton Roads two days later. At this time the dreaded *Merrimac* was expected any moment down Elizabeth River, and Lieutenant Trenchard received orders from Flag-Officer Goldsborough to be prepared for her. Rear-Admiral Thomas Stowell Phelps, of the United States Navy, has furnished the writer an interesting account of the preparations made by the *Rhode Island* and other Union vessels in Hampton Roads at that time to attack the *Merrimac*. Rear-Admiral Phelps was present at the time.

"The results of the actions on the 8th and

9th of March, 1862, having conclusively demonstrated the impotency of shells and solid shot against the iron-clad enemy, determined the Flag-Officer to subject the chances of victory to the crushing power of the vessels composing the United States fleet in Hampton Roads, and only in case of failure, by impact were guns of any description to enter into the problem, beyond attending to her consorts, numbering six Confederate steamers of various sizes and armaments. The apparently reliable information received from Norfolk through public prints, refugees, and private sources, 'that as soon as the repairs of the *Merrimac* were completed Commodore Tattnall would immediately proceed to attack or disperse the Federal fleet before Old Point, and perhaps capture Fortress Monroe,' confirmed the Flag-Officer in his plan of attack ; and in its execution every available resource at his command was centred in the one great object—the *Merrimac's* utter ruin ; and under no consideration were any side issues detrimental to success to be permitted to interfere with the accomplishment of a project of such vital importance : hence the capture of three small merchant vessels by the enemy was permitted, as any

preventive effort in that direction would have seriously militated against the inaugurated scheme, and probably rendered it abortive.

“During the short period intervening between March 8th and April 9th, the Navy Department had not been idle, and having strengthened the fleet to the extent of its ability, the Flag-Officer, by the 9th of April, was prepared to meet his antagonists with a force numbering about twenty-five unarmored vessels, composed in part of the *Minnesota*, the *Susquehanna*, the *Dakota*, the *Seminole*, the *San Jacinto*, the *Octorara*, the *Wachusett*, the *Aroostook*, the *Maratanza*, with others, including several ninety-day gunboats, and the chartered steamers *Vanderbilt*, *Oriole*, *Aroga*, *Rhode Island*, *Illinois*, *Ericson*, and three others of approximate tonnage (all ocean steamships), besides several others of lighter draft. In addition to these were the *Monitor* and the *Stevens*, the latter a small, experimental iron-clad boat, carrying one heavy gun. There was also the *Baltimore*, a light-river side-wheeler of great speed and curved bow, drawing only six inches forward and six feet aft, held in the front for the purpose of being forced upon one of the nearly submerged ends of the *Merrimac*, if



possible, either forward or abaft the superstructure, according to circumstances, in order to render the ironclad immovable, and while thus held she was to be rammed by vessels of the Union fleet.

"The fleet was anchored in two columns, the leading ships, the *Minnesota* and the *Vanderbilt*, about one and a half miles eastward from Fort Monroe, and the others in close order according to their size and power; the right wing being wholly made up of merchant vessels, and the left wing of National ships. The *Monitor* and *Stevens*, anchored before Hampton Harbor, were not to engage in the action unless the wooden ships failed in their mission, being held in reserve to complete the work with their ordnance, if necessary. None of the attacking vessels had their bows or cutwaters encased in iron, as many believed, nor were they in any way prepared for ramming, other than having their engines and boilers in good condition, and the steering apparatus protected by bedding; excepting the *Vanderbilt*, which had received a half-inch iron plate on the face of the stem, her bows strengthened in-board with fore and aft pieces of stout timbers, and her wheel barricaded with hammocks.



“The striking force in tons had been calculated for the principal vessels, and the *Vanderbilt*, capable of being forced up to eighteen knots an hour, proving the most formidable, was selected to lead in the attack, followed by the *Minnesota* and the others in succession, according to their positions in the column. To avoid unnecessary complications and for the safety of those concerned, the Flag-Officer directed that no transport or merchant-trader should go or anchor beyond Hampton Harbor. But in violation of this order, during the night of April 10th and 11th, two brigs and one schooner stole over to Newport News and cast anchor near a place called Beaches Landing, apparently about half-way between the former place and Old Point; and the next morning, on the appearance of the enemy, they were run aground and abandoned, being soon afterward taken possession of by the Confederate gunboats *Jamestown* and *Raleigh*, and towed to Norfolk unmolested, for reasons already given. The commander-in-chief firmly believed that Commodore Tattnall, ignoring the inefficient guns of the fort, would immediately proceed to execute the object of his appearing in the Roads, namely, ‘the destruction

or dispersion of the vessels arrayed against him,' and when the *Merrimac* had reached the point where the heavy ships could operate without risk of grounding, the machinery for testing the weighty experiment, inducing such herculean preparations, was to be set in motion.

"The morning of April 11th dawned exceptionally fine, with a gentle breeze stirring from the southwest, and the tide running at a moderate ebb, when at 7.45 A.M. the quiet pervading the fleet was unexpectedly broken by the announcement from the lookout on the *Minnesota's* mizzen cross-trees, 'The *Merrimac* is coming out, sir.' Instantly the signal 'Prepare for action' was made, quickly followed by one to 'Slip cables'; and in a few minutes the two ponderous columns were under way, with engines lazily turning, slowly drifting eastward until sufficient space had been acquired for the ships to deliver their heaviest blows, where they were held, waiting for the enemy to leave the shoals a couple of miles behind, where the serious work was to begin. The easterly drift already mentioned impressed our opponents with the belief that the Union fleet deliberately retreated toward the Capes to avoid an encounter for the supremacy of the Roads.

“Accompanied by six satellites the monster turtleback approached, belching huge volumes of inky smoke from her solitary funnel, and with her massive superstructure looming through the haze, she presented an object by no means inviting for restful contemplation, and on emerging from the Norfolk Channel she appeared to head for the fleet. Some fifteen minutes later, while Flag-Officer Goldsborough was impatiently waiting for her to reach a position where he could safely ‘let slip the dogs of war,’ with starboard helm she turned westward, and after some manœuvring became stationary, in apparent proximity to Middle Ground, near the place where the *Minnesota* had been decidedly grounded by her pilot on the 8th of the preceding month, while *en route* to succor the *Congress* and the *Cumberland*. In this position it was impossible for the Union fleet to attack.

“The *Merrimac*, seemingly at anchor, remained in this place until 4.30 P.M., when, after firing one shot toward Old Point, she with her consorts retired toward her moorings above Craney Island, where the intervening lands hid them from view, enabling the vessels of the fleet to regain the anchorage abandoned earlier



in the day. And perhaps it was quite as well that the placid waters of Hampton Roads had neither been crimsoned with the blood of hostile contestants nor encumbered with the wrecks of opposing ships. The boats of an English and a French man-of-war anchored northward of Newport News shoal were observed to communicate with the *Merrimac*, and about 2 P.M. the French ship weighed, and running to leeward of the fleet, her commander boarded the *Minnesota*, and in conversation with the Flag-Officer, remarked that during his interview with Commodore Tattnall, that officer had stated 'that he perfectly understood Goldsborough's plans and did not propose to subject his ships to certain destruction'; thus explaining why he refrained from attempting to accomplish the object of his visit to the Roads.

"The following day, about 9 A.M., the *Merrimac* was again reported as being under way, and on her nearing Craney Island with her consorts, preparations for her reception were quickly made, when turning around she soon disappeared from view, the condition of her hull and engines, as subsequently learned, making it necessary for her to return to Norfolk for repairs. On their completion a month



later, her career suddenly ended in flame and smoke by the agency of her own crew."

Lieutenant Trenchard in his journal, speaking of this affair, says: "Friday, April 11, 1862: Wind light from the northwest, clear and pleasant. Latter part of the day the wind was from the northeast. At half-past seven in the morning, the flagship made a general signal, 'Prepare for action.' We beat to quarters, got under way, and awaited the orders of the Flag-Officer in company with the other vessels of the fleet. The *Merrimac*, together with two large Confederate steamers and some four or five tugs, came down below Sewell's Point, and kept that position during the day, capturing two vessels and taking them up to Norfolk.

"Saturday, April 12th: First part, light airs from the north and pleasant; the latter part of the day the wind was from the northeast, moderate and clear. At 8.30 A.M. the flagship made signal 'Prepare for action.' We beat to quarters and made every preparation for a battle. Got under way and awaited further orders. About 10 A.M. the Flag-Officer made signal to proceed on our voyage. Ran up to the landing opposite Fort Monroe to com-

municate and receive the mails. At 11.20 A.M. stood down the harbor under a full head of steam. While we were waiting for our boat we had a good view of the *Merrimac* and the two other steamers off Sewell's Point."

On April 8th, while the *Rhode Island* was in Hampton Roads, the bark *Godfrey*, of New York, parted her cable, and being caught in the strong tide came in collision with the gunboat, destroying her starboard quarter-boat.

After taking on board a new propeller weighing six thousand pounds for the *Mercedita*, and a large quantity of nine- and eleven-inch shrapnel, the *Rhode Island* left Hampton Roads on her trip South. On the second day out she boarded the English bark *I. K. L.*, and the next day the *Jane Savage*, of London. Amid squalls and frequent showers of rain the *Rhode Island* supplied the ships and delivered the mails to the blockading squadron off Charleston. While off Wassaw Sound a singular coincidence happened. The United States gunboat *Wamsutta*, Lieutenant-Commander Semmes, a brother of the celebrated Raphael Semmes, came out and received supplies from the *Rhode Island* for the United States war-vessel *Alabama*—not the Confed-

erate cruiser in which Raphael Semmes made himself famous, but a United States vessel of that name. Lieutenant Trenchard also notes that "the steamer *Florida* came out and communicated with us." The *Florida* also was the name of a famous Confederate cruiser.

On the night of April 18th, while off the bar of Fernandina, Lieutenant Trenchard fell in with a strange vessel which he afterward believed to have been a Confederate cruiser. In his journal under date of April 18th he says: "At 3.15 A.M. got under way and at 6.25 A.M. anchored off the bar of Fernandina. Sent a boat in to communicate with the shore and to land the mails. The United States steamer *Pawnee* sent a boat out for her supplies. The United States schooner *Hope* came out and we supplied her, and at 2 P.M. got under way. At 8.10 P.M. we anchored off St. Augustine, fired a gun and a rocket besides coston signals. A vessel of war inside the bar made her number commencing with No. 7. Could not make out what vessel it might be, but supposed that one of the vessels from Mosquito Inlet had come up. Signaled her to send boats for her supplies, which was answered and the vessel telegraphed, 'Have



you any communications for me?' Supposing it might be the *Andrews* or the *Penguin*, the reply was in the affirmative. The vessel then signaled, 'I will send a boat.' After waiting over two hours and no boat coming, I signaled, 'Ready to proceed; send boat for letters.' The vessel replied by burning a number of coston signals from which I could only make out the first, 'no boat.' I dispatched a boat with the mail in charge of the executive officer, Mr. Pennell, with directions not to cross the bar if the sea was breaking upon it. He proceeded in and when within hail of the vessel, finding that they were going to quarters and fearing that they might fire into the boat, concluded, upon seeing the signal for the recall of the boat, to return. Mr. Pennell reported that it was perfectly smooth upon the bar, and that boats could have crossed it without difficulty. As the *Rhode Island* had been detained some five hours I concluded to continue on my course."

While standing down the Florida coast on the following night, the *Rhode Island* made the lights of a steamer directly ahead, and almost at the same instant the stranger seemed to have discovered the *Rhode Island*, for she



put about and cautiously drew near. Equal caution was shown by the *Rhode Island*, for the result of the action between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* had spread a degree of distrust all along the Confederate seaboard, and it was not known when or where these new sea monsters might appear. As it was impossible to make out the stranger's number, the suspicions of the *Rhode Island's* people were increased. Gradually the two vessels drew near, each ready to fire at a moment's notice. Finally, when within hailing distance, the stranger was found to be the United States warship *Santiago de Cuba*. Giving her fresh provisions the *Rhode Island* continued on her course South. Just as she was nearing Key West she met the *Connecticut* on her return trip and was boarded for news.

While entering St. Mark's Harbor, April 26th, the *Rhode Island* met with an accident that nearly ended her useful career. Lieutenant Trenchard says in his journal: "At ten o'clock got under way for St. Mark's. A large ship is in sight, to the south, probably the *National Guard*. At 5 P.M. made the land off St. Mark's and about an hour afterward sighted the bark *Kingfisher*. At 6.40 P.M.

anchored in four fathoms of water about two and a half miles from her. At 7 P.M. the pilot of the *Kingfisher*, John Welles, came on board to take the steamer in. At 7.20 P.M. got under way and went ahead slowly. At 7.40 P.M. the ship struck in fourteen feet of water on a knoll, the lead indicating just before striking a quarter less four. Sent a boat out to sound and found the water, with the exception of the midships, varying from sixteen to twenty-one and a half feet. The ship at the time was in charge of the pilot. At 10 P.M., the tide having risen, we backed the steamer off the shoals and anchored in four fathoms of water."

Stopping at the blockaded ports, the *Rhode Island* varied her usual course by going up the Mississippi River, New Orleans having fallen after Farragut's successful passage of the forts only a few days before. The journal says: "At 5.30 A.M. got under way and stood up the Mississippi River. At 8 A.M. came up with the United States ship *Portsmouth* at anchor six miles above Pilot Town. Transferred Acting-Master Richmond, and the prize crew with him, to the *Portsmouth*. At 10.15 A.M. passed the gunboats *Cayuga* and *Wissa-*

*hickon*, the former bound North, with dispatches bearing upon the capture of New Orleans. At 11.30 A.M. passed Forts Jackson and St. Philip in our possession. At 1 P.M. anchored off the Quarantine ground and supplied the *Mississippi*, which vessel received us with her band playing "Yankee Doodle." There was a large number of troops concentrated at Quarantine *en route* up the river. At 2 P.M. got under way, and at 7 P.M. anchored for the night.

" THURSDAY, May 1, 1862.

" At 4.30 A.M. got under way and stood up the river. At 7 A.M. came up with the gunboat *Owasco* on shore. Anchored so as to aid her in getting off. At 11.30 A.M. succeeded in towing her off, after making two or three attempts and parting our hawsers, etc., and then stood up for New Orleans, anchoring off the city at 1.30 P.M. Supplied the United States steamer *Harriet Lane* and she proceeded soon afterward down the river. The steamer *Diana*, in charge of my nephew, Midshipman Grafton, came up the river with troops, a large number of which landed just before sunset, General Butler taking possession of the city of New Orleans, and releasing



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the marines from the squadron that had held it after its surrender to Flag-Officer Farragut.

"NEW ORLEANS, FRIDAY, May 2d.

"Supplied a large number of vessels with fresh provisions, etc. The following vessels were off New Orleans: the *Hartford*, the *Pensacola*, the *Richmond*, the *Harriet Lane*, the *Sciota*, the *Katahdin*, and the *Westfield*. At 5.50 P.M. got under way and stood up the river in order to turn round. In doing this we grounded on the Algiers side of the river. At 7 P.M. the steamer *Star* came over and attempted to tow us off, and failing to do so, at 8.30 P.M. she cast off and made fast to the levee, in doing which she caught her port wheel and remained there until the following morning.

"SATURDAY, May 3d.

"At 8 A.M. succeeded in getting the *Star* (alias *St. Charles*) clear of the levee. The coal barge *Tully Robinson* came up and together with the *Star* made several attempts to haul us off during the day. The *Richmond* also came up, but the water being too deep to anchor sufficiently near us, and dragging her anchors, she was unable to render us any assistance. Captain Alden was very much inter-



ested and very assiduous in his efforts to get us off. We remained ashore until 12.45 P.M. of the 6th, making daily attempts to get the ship off, aided by the *Kensington*.

"SUNDAY, May 4th.

"Engaged in the mean time in lightening the ship, and on Tuesday the 6th, with the aid of the steamer *Star*, or *St. Charles*, on the starboard quarter, the *Katahdin* and the *Tully Robinson* on the port quarter, the *Rhode Island* started off at 12.45 P.M., to the extreme joy of everyone on board. It is impossible for me to express my joy and thankfulness in getting the steamer afloat. A sad accident occurred, casting a gloom on all, to one of the lighters containing some of our coal and a number of laborers employed by us. She was in tow of the *Tully Robinson*, contrary to my orders, and was unfortunately swamped and three men were drowned."

The wife of one of the lost men was aboard the barge at the time, and the officers of the *Rhode Island* were so affected by her grief that they made up a purse of three hundred dollars for her.

"WEDNESDAY, May 7, 1862.

"Got under way and anchored on the New

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Orleans side of the river near the levee. Was employed during the greater part of the day in getting our coal and other things on board that had been removed to lighten the vessel when getting her off the shore. Pleasant visit on shore with Dr. Smith and Capt. George Henry Preble. Visit to Mrs. General Butler at the St. Charles Hotel, the General's headquarters.

" THURSDAY, May 8th.

" At 1.30 P.M. got under way and proceeded down the river. Just before reaching Forts Jackson and St. Philip the *Rhode Island* passed a break in the levee, through which the water of the river was rushing in alarming quantities and flooding the surrounding country. It required no little skill and steam and power to prevent the vessel from being carried into the side current, where she undoubtedly would soon be left high and dry on land, some yards from the river bank."

Lieutenant Trenchard notes that it was an "exciting scene." At Pilot Town the *Rhode Island*, by order of Farragut, took aboard forty-one Confederate prisoners, who were engaged in resisting the National attack. Among them were Com. I. K. Mitchell, Captains Beverly Kennon and Wilkinson, who commanded di-

visions of the Confederate naval forces, and the officers and crew of the ironclad *Louisiana*.

Captain Wilkinson, the famous blockade-runner, writing of his experiences in the *Rhode Island*, says :

“ We were transferred to the *Rhode Island*, bound to Fort Warren. On board of this vessel we were more completely tabooed by the officers than in the *Colorado*, for the *Rhode Island* was officered, with the exception of her captain, by volunteers. The harsh orders had been evaded on board the former vessel by old friends and shipmates. On board the *Rhode Island* the orders were strictly obeyed, much to our satisfaction, for we would have lost our patience to have been interviewed by fledgling naval heroes. The noble commander of the *Rhode Island* most of us had known of old as a prim little precisian, and a great stickler for etiquette, and by no means a bad fellow ; but so strict a constructionist that he would probably have refused to recognize his grandfather, if it were against orders. But he had a humane disposition under his frigid exterior ; and allowed us all the comfort and privileges compatible with discipline and safety. At Fort Warren, we were allowed, at our own expense,



to supply our table from the Boston market, not only abundantly, but luxuriously, the Government furnishing the usual rations, and the prisoners grew fat on the good fare and bracing climate."

After their arrival at Fort Warren, both Mitchell and Kennon addressed letters to the Secretary of the Navy. Mitchell said: "I most emphatically assert that the *Louisiana*, when abandoned and fired by my orders, was not only 'not turned adrift' or intended to injure the United States forces, as charged by Commander Porter, but that she was actually left secured to the opposite bank of the river, and distant quite three fourths of a mile from the said forces, for the very reason they were flying a flag of truce, and for that reason I despatched the warning message to Commander Porter, respecting the magazine. That it is not only the right, but the duty of an officer to destroy public property to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy does not admit of a question; and in addition to which, it must not be overlooked that the forces under my command flew no flag of truce, and that I was not in any way a party to the surrender of Fort Jackson or St. Philip." He



had previously addressed a letter to the Department and forwarded it by Commander Trenchard from Hampton Roads. The Secretary replied, May 29, 1862 :

"SIR:—The explanations of Com. I. K. Mitchell are satisfactory, and the restrictions imposed on him and his associates by the Department's order of the 2d inst. will be removed, and they will be treated as prisoners of war. This does not relieve Beverly Kennon from the restrictions imposed on him.

"GIDEON WELLES.

"COL. JUSTINE DINMICK,  
*Comdg. Fort Warren.*"

The Secretary requested Kennon to furnish him with particulars of his gunboat, having wounded on board. In reply Kennon says :

"When I destroyed and left the vessel which I had commanded on the occasion referred to, all the wounded men had been removed, the most of them lowered in boats by my own hands. I was the last person to leave the vessel."

The restrictions were removed from Kennon, too, soon after this communication was received by the Secretary.

On her return trip the *Rhode Island* reached Pensacola May 10th, just in time to learn that the Confederates had evacuated the place. Lieutenant Trenchard speaks of the "sad appearance of the Navy Yard, which had been fired by the Confederates, reducing it to a mass of ruins. The town of Warrington and the naval hospitals presented the same appearance." At Key West, Lieutenant Trenchard took aboard the officers and crew of the steamer *Bermuda*, which had been captured by the *Mercedita*.

On Friday, May 16th, while twenty miles from Carrysford Reef Light, the *Rhode Island* passed the wreck of a hermaphrodite brig. Part of her stern and starboard quarter was out of the water. The vessel appeared to be of foreign build and measured about two hundred tons. The forward spars were new, while the after spars were old. From appearances Lieutenant Trenchard judged that she must have been struck by a squall and dismasted. Boarding the American steamer *Columbia* on the following day, Lieutenant Trenchard learned of the surrender of Norfolk.

As the *Rhode Island* was leaving Port Royal she met her sister ship, the *Connecticut*, bound

on her Southern supply trip. About the same time the *Rhode Island* was boarded by the United States steamer *Augusta*. Touching at Fort Monroe, where Lieutenant Trenchard visited a number of the sick and received "good news from home, all well," he hastened on his way for Boston, arriving there May 23d.

Here the prisoners of war, under charge of Acting-Master Williams with a guard of marines, were conveyed in a tug to Fort Warren and safely lodged there. Lieutenant Trenchard says: "It is impossible to describe my great relief and thankfulness in reaching Boston safely, and without having experienced any trouble with the prisoners over whom we had kept such a vigilant watch."







## CHAPTER XIV.

### LAST CRUISES AS A SUPPLY-STEAMER.

ON June 2, 1862, Secretary Welles sent the following order to Lieutenant Trenchard making a change in the *Rhode Island's* ordinary trips: "Hereafter the United States steamer *Rhode Island* will not supply the vessels of the Atlantic Squadrons, and will touch at Port Royal only on the way to the Gulf Squadrons, commencing at Cape Carnival. On your return trip you will touch both at Port Royal and Hampton Roads, forwarding your mail as you do from the latter place to the Department. You will continue to bring home the sick and wounded from Port Royal and Hampton Roads, and from any other vessels for the Atlantic Squadron that you may communicate with. Proceed on this



service as soon as the *Rhode Island* is ready for sea, and enter Boston on your return.

"I am, respectfully,

"Your Obedient Servant,

"GIDEON WELLES."

June 11th, 1862, the *Rhode Island* left Boston on her seventh trip South, having on board two hundred seamen, and a number of acting-masters and mates as supernumeraries for the several blockading squadrons. At Hampton Roads, June 12th, she took on board an unusually heavy mail and then resumed her course for Port Royal, boarding, on the way, the schooner *Mary Stuart* of Nassau, a prize of the *Gem of the Sea*, captured off Georgetown, S. C., with a cargo of oil, etc. The *Mary Stuart* was bound for New York for adjudication. A number of other vessels also were boarded, but finding their papers all right, Lieutenant Trenchard did not detain them.

On arriving off Charleston the *Rhode Island* exchanged signals with the United States steamer *Alabama* and the schooner *Flash*, and shortly afterward the blockading ships were descried off Stono Inlet. The sea was so heavy and the fog so dense at the time that Lieutenant Trenchard deemed it too hazard-

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ous to run in, and so stood on and off, blowing his steam-whistle every few minutes so as to warn any vessel that might be coming in collision with her. On the next day the weather cleared, and Lieutenant Trenchard spoke the supply-steamer *Connecticut* on her return trip. The *Rhode Island* then ran into Port Royal and anchored near the flagship *Wabash*. "Landed the mails," wrote Lieutenant Trenchard; "transferred the men and stores for the squadron. I dined with Flag-Officer Dupont and Capt. C. R. P. Rodgers, remaining with them until getting under way at 5.40 P.M."

Off Mosquito Inlet, Florida, June 19th, the *Rhode Island* made her number to a steamer anchored within the inlet, supposed to be the *Wyandotte*. Skirting the Florida coast, two or three miles from land, she boarded, on June 20th, the English brig *Annita* from Matanzas for Halifax, and on the following day, just after passing Carrysford Reef Light, the brig *John Jewett* from New York to New Orleans was spoken. At Key West the flagship *San Jacinto* of the flying squadron, Flag-Officer James L. Lardner, the *Quaker City*, the *Guard*, the *Sagamore*, the *Wanderer*, and the *Mercedita* were found. The *Rhode Island* left Key

West June 24th, and reached Fort Jefferson, Tortugas, at 1.45. Lieutenant Trenchard notes: "Went on shore and took a look at the works and found great improvement had taken place since my former visit."

In order to delay the *Rhode Island* as little as possible many of the war-steamers, immediately upon making the *Rhode Island's* number, came out of the harbor and received their supplies at sea. June 28th, Lieutenant Trenchard notes: "Light airs from the north and east,—clear and pleasant. At 6.30 A.M. the steam gunboat *Young Rover*, came out. Supplied her, and at 7.30 A.M. parted company for the Western Pass of Appalachicola. On reaching the Middle Pass, found the United States bark *I. L. Davis* at anchor, and she was soon after joined by the steam gunboat *Fort Henry*. These boats came out for supplies, and after receiving them we got under way for St. Andrews, arriving there at 8 P.M., meeting the schooner *Samuel Rotan* and supplying her. Saturday, June 28th, light airs from the south and west. At 5.40 A. M. made Santa Rosa Island Lighthouse on the starboard bow. At 7 A.M. received a pilot and stood in and ran up to Pensacola, anchoring near the United



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States ship *Vincennes*, off the town. Captain Madigan came on board and breakfasted with me. After breakfast I went on shore and called on General Arnold. Got under way at 11.30 A.M., *en route* for Mobile, Lieutenant Crosby, U. S. A., aide to General Arnold, taking passage with us. Spoke the schooner *Henry Frams* of Key West from Pensacola for New Orleans. We were compelled to fire a shot across her bow to bring her to and show her colors."

On Sunday, June 29th, while off Ship Island supplying the old sailing frigate *Potomac*, the *Rhode Island* was overtaken by a terrific thunder storm, the lightning at times making the crew apprehensive for the safety of the magazine. The storm blew over, however, without injury to the ship. At this place Capt. Levin M. Powell, of the *Potomac*, became a passenger in the *Rhode Island*, bound for New Orleans. The naval hospital at Pilot Town was duly furnished with supplies, besides the war-vessels stationed there and at New Orleans. In crossing the bar, coming out of the river, the *Rhode Island* struck ground, but sustained no serious injury.

On the morning of July 4, 1862, the *Rhode*



*Island* won the immortal glory of being the first United States vessel to plant the Stars and Stripes on Texan soil after the Civil War broke out. On this day, the *Rhode Island* being about seventeen miles to the south and west of Galveston, a sail was made close in with the land. The *Rhode Island* stood toward her, but as soon as the character of the Union vessel was discovered by the stranger, she immediately put her helm up and ran ashore. The day being fine and the water smooth, the *Rhode Island* ran close in to the beach, and on discovering a force of cavalry and infantry on shore, who evidently were unloading the vessel, she opened fire with shell. This had the effect of putting them to flight. Three armed boats from the *Rhode Island* were then lowered under command of Acting-Master Pennell, executive officer of the *Rhode Island*, assisted by Paymaster Douglass and Engineer McCutchen, and pulled toward the vessel covered by the guns of the *Rhode Island*, and under instructions of Lieutenant Trenchard to see if the vessel could be got off, and if not to destroy her. They succeeded in boarding her without molestation and found her to be the English schooner *Richard O'Brien* from Jamaica to

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Matamoras. A few days before she had been boarded by the *De Soto* and warned off the coast. Lieutenant Trenchard was of the opinion that she was a Confederate vessel, and having succeeded in running the blockade, changed her flag in Jamaica, as her papers had the appearance of being recently made out. Mr. Pennell on boarding the vessel found that she had bilged, and that getting her off would be impossible. He therefore, following his instructions, filled all the boats with valuable drugs which constituted a large part of her cargo, set the vessel on fire, and returned to the ship. The schooner, with the balance of her cargo, part of which had been landed before the *Rhode Island* hove in sight, was entirely consumed. The cargo rescued, consisting of rum and sugar, was sold for \$1209.78, the prize money amounting to \$838.85.

While the boats were away, Lieutenant Trenchard observed another vessel in what had the appearance of being a lake or lagoon, separated by only a narrow neck of land from the ocean. Wishing to destroy her if possible, he ordered Mr. Pennell to start again, and on landing, he found it possible to haul his boats over the sand and attack as he had the *Richard*

*O'Brien.* The party landed, protected by the *Rhode Island's* guns, in safety, and Mr. Pennell planted the Stars and Stripes on Texan soil. But on reaching the shore he discovered the narrow sand spot to be at least a mile wide, thus rendering their second expedition fruitless, for hauling boats that distance was simply an impossibility, especially in an enemy's country. While they were ashore Lieutenant Trenchard discovered a company of cavalry approaching, but a few well-directed shells caused them to flee.

After reaching Galveston the *Rhode Island* began her return trip, stopping at New Orleans and Mobile. At the latter port, Paymaster Washington Irving came on board for passage home. Taking aboard invalids and mails for the North, the *Rhode Island* continued her voyage.

On July 15th, while approaching Key West, Lieutenant Trenchard notes: "At 5 P.M. made the bark *Hamilton* of New York from Key West for Trinidad de Cuba, the captain of which did not show his colors until ordered, and then treated the boarding officer with the greatest indignity and disrespect. At 7 P.M. anchored at Key West and found that the steamer *Connecticut* had just arrived five days



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from New York." On July 23d, the *Rhode Island* passed an English bark which also refused to show her colors until a blank cartridge was fired at her. The *Rhode Island* arrived at Boston July 25th, when her armament was increased by two rifled 12-pounders. On July 16th, Lieutenant Trenchard was promoted to the rank of commander.

Taking on board two hundred seamen for the squadrons of Farragut and Dupont, the *Rhode Island* left Boston August 2d. On the third day out much excitement was occasioned by David A. Mentar, one of the crew, a coal-heaver, jumping overboard. The engines were promptly stopped, the life-buoy let go, boats were lowered, and every effort was made to save the unfortunate man, but in vain. He perished before assistance could reach him.

At five minutes after five, on the morning of September 5th, while the *Rhode Island* was at sea, on her voyage between Port Royal and Hampton Roads, on her return trip North, a dense volume of smoke was discovered coming from the port cargo room forward. Lieutenant Trenchard notes: "Went to quarters and after tracing the site of the fire introduced the hose and soon extinguished the flames. The fire



originated between two of the timbers abreast of the furnace on the port side. We beat a retreat at 1.30 A.M., keeping a watch near the place of the fire with buckets filled with water, in readiness to extinguish the fire should it break out again. It was supposed, after a careful examination of the place after daylight, that it originated by oil that had been spilt, which may have run in between the timbers, saturated shavings lodged there in building the vessel, and fired by the extreme heat of the furnace."

The *Rhode Island* returned from this trip September 10th. On September 25th, 1862, she left Boston on her ninth and last trip as a supply-vessel, having on board a large number of supernumerary officers for the blockading squadrons. At Hampton Roads Commander Trenchard took on board Captain Thornton A. Jenkins as a passenger. "At 4.45 P.M., October 2d, she passed Port Royal lightboat, entered the harbor, anchoring near the flagship *Vermont*; Captain Godon being temporarily in command. The *Wabash* and several other vessels were in port at the time. A number of supernumerary officers were left on board the *Vermont* to join their respective

vessels, and some additional ones came on board for passage in this vessel. At 5.25 P.M. the *Potomaska* got under way. At 7 A.M. we got under way and stopped abreast of the *Vandalia*, standing in to send three men attached to the *Octorara* on board. A boat from the *Vandalia* came alongside and unfortunately got under the wheels, which turned, swamped and upset the boat and crew, the men being providentially saved."

"At 7 A.M., October 8th," wrote Commander Trenchard, "while running from Key West to Cedar Keys, the *Rhode Island* gave chase to a suspicious sail. At 9.40 the chase hauled in for the shore and came to anchor. We stood in for her until shoaling water made it dangerous to proceed farther, when we stopped the engines, fired a blank cartridge for her to run out, and she failing to do so we fired a shell ahead of her, lowered a boat, and sent her to board the sloop, which got under way. She proved to be the fishing sloop *Wanderer* of Key West. Her commander was informed that he should have come out to us upon the signal having been made. By not doing so he had made himself liable to seizure."

On her return trip the *Rhode Island*, soon

after leaving Cedar Keys, gave chase to another suspicious sail. Commander Trenchard says : "Sunday, November 2d : First part of the day moderate breezes from the east, with squally weather, and occasionally showers. At 4.40 A.M., spoke a steamer standing to the north, and not learning her name, gave chase after having burned costons preparatory, and being answered, made our number, to which the steamer replied, *Stars and Stripes*. Not learning of that vessel being upon the station, and supposing her to be a suspicious character, I determined to get nearer. In approaching her she attempted to cross our bow. On perceiving this manœuvre our engines were reversed and the steamer hailed and ordered to do the same, or stop. The two vessels came in contact ; we continued backing strong, thus preventing a more serious collision. Our false stem was slightly started by the shock, and the starboard anchor of the *Stars and Stripes* was torn away. The last-named vessel sustained no injury, as reported by her."

On Tuesday, November 24th, Commander Trenchard reports : "At 1 A.M. made a steamer, beat to quarters, and upon boarding her she proved to be the royal British steamer



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*Baracoa* from Nassau, bound for Key West." The *Rhode Island* arrived at Boston from this trip November 11th.

The following notice from the Boston *Advertiser*, in 1862, speaks well for the services of the *Rhode Island*: "The dispatch of government orders, mails, supplies, etc., to the vessels and squadrons employed on the blockade of Southern ports by the *Rhode Island*, under her present efficient commander and a corps of skilful officers, has proved her an invaluable friend to the thousands of patient and courageous officers and seamen who through the long months now past have held the passes of the rebellious coast."







## CHAPTER XV.

### SINKING OF THE "MONITOR."

WITH the occupation of New Orleans, Pensacola, Port Royal, Fernandina, and other ports along the Southern coast by the Unionists, it became much easier for the blockading squadrons to obtain fresh supplies, and it was found that one steamer could properly maintain the service. The *Rhode Island* had proved, on more than one occasion, her capacity for fighting, and on her return to the Boston Navy Yard, November, 1862, she was fitted out as a gunboat, while to the *Connecticut* was assigned the duty of delivering provisions and mails to the blockading squadrons and bringing back the sick and wounded. The *Rhode Island's* old battery, with the exception of the 30-pounder Parrott gun, and one rifled 12-pounder Dahlgren gun, was removed and

replaced with one 9-inch Dahlgren on the port side aft, and eight 8-inch guns in the broadside, each weighing sixty-three hundred-weight. Her complement also was increased with some additional rates.

Thus refitted and equipped the *Rhode Island* on a clear winter's day, tempered by a south-west breeze, steamed down Boston Harbor and made fast to the centre buoy of the Compass Station off Deer Island for the purpose of making the necessary observations for local attraction. The officers of the ship at this time were: Commander, Stephen Decatur Trenchard; Acting Masters, William Williams and T. N. Meyer; Acting Ensigns, Samuel H. Field and Albert Taylor; Paymaster, Richard Hall Douglass; Assistant Surgeon, Samuel G. Webb; Acting First Assistant Engineer, John F. McCutchen; Acting Third Assistant Engineers, George H. Rutter, Joseph C. Davis, Granville Davis, Anthony French, Isaac S. March; Acting Masters' Mates, E. W. Watson, Lemuel Pope, William H. H. Stevens, Daniel R. Brown, William Rogers; Captain's Clerk, F. C. T. Beck; Paymaster's Clerk, Frank H. Deal.

The *Rhode Island* left Boston December

5th on her maiden cruise as a full-fledged gun-boat. While off Cape Henry three days later, she suddenly ran into shoal water, and soon afterward struck bottom. As the ship, at the time, was some distance from land and there was a considerable sea on, much alarm was felt, as it was feared that she would thump to pieces and the officers and crew would be left to struggle for their lives far out at sea. The striking of the ship occurred long before daylight, and the intense darkness, together with the rough water, made it extremely difficult for the ship to manœuvre. The engines were promptly reversed and the sails were set and braced back. Boats were lowered to take soundings and kedge-anchors were run out on the weather quarter. After great efforts and with no little danger of the boats capsizing, the vessel was dragged off the shoals and again brought into deep water. Some time was spent in examining into the condition of the ship. The pumps were sounded to see if she was leaking seriously. At 10.30 A.M. Commander Trenchard was satisfied that his ship had sustained no serious injuries, and half an hour later, having taken a pilot aboard, he ran into Hampton Roads and anchored off



Sinking of the "Monitor." 211

Fort Monroe, reporting on board the flag-  
steamer *Philadelphia*.

The following is an extract from a letter  
written by one of the officers of the *Rhode  
Island* in reference to this mishap :

" FRIDAY, December 19, 1862.

"The United States steamer *Rhode Island*  
arrived here yesterday from Boston. Shortly  
after leaving port she encountered a tremen-  
dous gale, which kept her knocking about for  
two days, making little or no headway. She  
was struck by a heavy sea which carried away  
both her wheel-houses and received other  
damage. After outriding the gale and while  
proceeding into Hampton Roads, at midnight  
on Wednesday she struck a reef, where she  
remained until daylight next morning before  
she got off. The wind, blowing a gale at the  
time, fortunately was off the land : had it not  
been so she would certainly have become a  
total wreck. As it was, so dangerous was  
their position, that the officers had everything  
in readiness to leave at a moment's notice. I  
think from what I have heard the officers say  
she will have to go into the dry dock before  
proceeding on her cruise."

During the few days the vessel remained in



this port, Commander Trenchard kept his crew constantly exercising at the great guns and with such success that two days later when Captain Samuel Phillips Lee of the North Atlantic blockading squadron came aboard to inspect the ship he highly complimented her officers on the thorough man-of-war appearance the little cruiser presented.

The first important duty on which the *Rhode Island* was assigned as a gunboat made her famous by associating her with the tragic loss of the *Monitor*. In Commander Trenchard's private papers there appears a sequel to the loss of that ill-fated ironclad which has escaped general attention, and which will be given in Commander Trenchard's own words. The Navy Department had decided to transfer the newly constructed *Passaic*, *Montauk*, and the *Monitor*, the last being commanded by Captain John Pine Bankhead, from Hampton Roads to Port Royal, for the purpose of assisting in the operations on that part of the Confederate coast.

Commander Trenchard in his journal records: "Hampton Roads, Monday, December 29, 1862. Light airs from the south and west, mild and pleasant weather. The U. S. steamer

*Connecticut* arrived during the evening, and soon afterward the iron-clad steamer *Montauk* (monitor No. 3) came in and anchored. In the afternoon we got under way with the *Monitor* in tow, the steamer *State of Georgia* having previously started with the *Passaic* in tow. Issued the following night orders: 'The officer of the deck is directed to have a very bright lookout kept off the bow and beam. He will sound at ten o'clock and inform me of the depth of water: also at four o'clock in the morning. The course will be S. S. E. as at present steered until order is changed. Keep a sharp lookout upon the *Monitor* astern, and should she signal *attend to it at once*; then report to me. Inform me of every change of wind and weather. The speed of the steamer should be regulated by the sea. If it increases, moderate the speed; if smooth, increase it. Inform me when the steamer has made sixty miles from 10 P.M.'

"Tuesday, December 30, 1862. The first part of the twenty-four hours the wind was light from the south and west; clear and pleasant. The *Monitor* is making good headway in the good weather and is turning easily. Our speed averages five to six miles an hour. At one o'clock in the afternoon we sighted

Cape Hatteras Light, bearing west by southwest fourteen miles distant. The sea continued smooth during the day, and at sunset there was every indication of a favorable night. We had got to the south of Hatteras Shoals and anticipated a favorable termination of our voyage the following day. The steamer *State of Georgia*, with the *Passaic* in tow, was in sight some six or eight miles to the north and east of us, and the steamer *Cahanta* was this side of her with a troop-ship in tow. At seven o'clock in the evening, the wind commenced freshening and hauling more to the south, and by half-past nine o'clock it blew a gale, attended with rain and squally weather. At nine o'clock Captain Bankhead signaled us to stop the engines, and finding that the *Monitor* had fallen off into the trough of the sea, and that the waves were making a complete breach over her, we started the engines again. The steamer soon brought her head to the wind under easy steam, when the *Monitor* appeared to make better weather.

"At 11 P.M. Captain Bankhead signaled that he required assistance, and upon stopping the engines, and on the *Monitor* ranging up alongside, he hailed, and said, 'The *Monitor* is



sinking !' Our boats were immediately cleared away, and arrangements were made to get the officers and crew from the sinking ironclad to the *Rhode Island* with as little delay as possible. The port hawser with which we were towing the *Monitor* had parted in the early part of the evening, and the stream cable was cut by someone on board the ironclad. About eleven o'clock, or soon afterward, our boats succeeded in getting nearly all on board, and the first cutter had started to get the remainder on board, when, unhappily, about 1.30 A.M., on the 31st of December, the *Monitor* suddenly disappeared. Acting Master's-Mate D. Rodney Brown was in charge of the cutter, having with him Charles H. Smith, coxswain, Morris Wagg, coxswain, Hugh Logan, captain of the afterguard, Lewis A. Horton, seaman, George Moore, seaman, Luke M. Griswold, ordinary seaman, and John Jones, landsman, who composed the crew of the boat. We lost sight of the cutter, and kept as near the position as possible until daylight, and then cruised up in the direction of Hatteras Shoals for the remainder of the day in hopes of picking up our boat. The wind hauled around to the northwest at nine o'clock in the morning.



" THURSDAY, January 1, 1863.

" A clear, bright day with a fresh northwest wind. We reached the blockading vessels off Wilmington this day. The vessels consisted of the *Maratanza*, Commander Scott ; *Chicora*, Lieutenant-Commander Truxtun ; and the *Monticello*, Lieutenant-Commander Braine. We communicated with Captain Scott and finding that Captain Sands, for whom I had despatches, had left for Beaufort, I was directed to proceed to that place, and left for there at 5.30 P.M.

" FRIDAY, January 2d.

" At 7.30 A.M. we made the land bearing north-northeast, and at 10 A.M. came to anchor off the bar of Beaufort. Went in and communicated with the commanding officer, and reported the loss of the *Monitor*. We were directed to proceed immediately to Hampton Roads, and at 4.45 P.M. got under way in obedience to the order."

The fate of the lost cutter is graphically described in the papers of Commander Trenchard. The first is his report of the occurrence to Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy.

## Sinking of the "Monitor." 217

" U. S. Steamer *Rhode Island*, BEAUFORT HARBOR,

" January 10, 1863.

"SIR :—It gives me great satisfaction to report that Acting Master's-Mate D. Rodney Brown, together with the boat's crew missing from this vessel since the loss of the *Monitor*, have rejoined the *Rhode Island*. They reached Beaufort on the second instant. I enclose herewith a statement in detail of Mr. Brown's last trip in the first cutter of this vessel. I would respectfully commend to the consideration of the department the noble conduct of Mr. Harriman, commander of the schooner *A. Colby* of Buckport, Maine, in rescuing our men, in which service his vessel sustained serious injury by getting on Diamond Shoals.

" I am, very respectfully,

" Your obedient servant,

"STEPHEN D. TRENCHARD."

When the *Rhode Islanders* touched at Beaufort, January 1st, and heard nothing of their missing boat's crew, they gave the men up as lost. Great was their joy, however, on receiving a despatch from Mr. Brown, giving an account of his adventures. The despatch was dated January 10, 1863. It seems that

after having made two trips to the *Monitor*, he started on the third, and after leaving the *Rhode Island*, he saw the red light burning at the flag-staff of the *Monitor*, and apparently about one mile distant. As the sea and the wind were against him, he made but little progress, yet he continued gaining until within a quarter of a mile of the *Monitor*, when the light suddenly became extinguished. It appeared to settle gradually in the water as he approached her and then it disappeared altogether. When he approached to what he supposed to be the position of the vessel, he could perceive no other trace of her except an eddy produced by the sinking craft. He remained near that position as long as he deemed prudent, in order to rescue any of the crew who might be in the water. But he found none. He then started for the *Rhode Island*, which then appeared to be two miles distant, the weather being overcast and attended with a slight rain, the wind hauling off to the north. Soon afterward he lost sight of the *Rhode Island*, but shortly afterward saw the first, second, and third lights. This is the last he saw of the *Rhode Island* that night. He then made a drag of the boat's mast by which he kept her head



to the sea, the men being constantly on the lookout for a signal. As none could be seen, he then made for the northward and westward, finding the sea too rough to pull directly to the west, hoping to fall in with some coasting vessel.

Mr. Brown kept the boat's crew pulling all night in order to overcome the great strength of the current. He thought that if they did not do this they would drift far away from the track of all vessels before daylight. At break of day he discovered a schooner some four or five miles away from them. He also mentioned seeing a small boat some distance off with two or three men in her, observing her as she rose two or three times upon the crest of a wave and then disappearing. At this time Brown's crew was taken up with the management of their own boat, the sea being very irregular and the waves seeming to come from all quarters. After losing sight of the schooner referred to, Mr. Brown saw a large ship close hauled, the wind being from the northward and eastward. He had approached her sufficiently near to make out the men upon her decks, but she passed on without noticing his signals for assistance. He then pulled directly in for



the land, which he estimated to be about ten miles distant.

This was about half-past nine o'clock in the morning of December 31st, and about an hour afterward he made a schooner to leeward. He got up the crew's coats in order to make the sail, and broke some of his oars to assist in rigging the sail. He then ran down for the schooner, and about eleven o'clock managed to get alongside. The schooner proved to be the *A. Colby*, commanded by H. D. Harriman, of Buckport, Maine, bound for Fernandina, with bricks for government use. Mr. Brown and his crew were received with every kindness.

The cutter was taken aboard the schooner, and Mr. Harriman was requested to change his course so far as to land the officers and men at Beaufort, N. C. This he consented to do, but in running in for the coast, with a view of ascertaining more correctly his position, having been without an observation for several days, his schooner struck on Diamond Shoals, off Cape Hatteras. Being laden with brick, which strained the vessel dangerously every time she struck bottom, it was feared that the *A. Colby* would soon go to

pieces. As it was, she began to leak dangerously. Mr. Harriman managed to get her afloat, and, continuing on his course for Beaufort, he anchored that night under the land near Cape Hatteras Inlet. The men were kept constantly at work pumping out the water as fast as it leaked in. On the following day they sighted a steamer, and made the signal of distress. Harriman went aboard the vessel, which proved to be the U. S. gunboat *Miami*, Captain Townsend. Mr. Harriman reported the situation of his schooner and the crew, upon which Captain Townsend despatched a boat with twelve men, to assist in getting the schooner into port.

That same afternoon they started for Beaufort, reaching there on the morning of the 2d of January. Arriving there, Mr. Brown reported to Captain Drayton, the senior naval officer, requesting that he and his crew might be permitted to remain on board the *A. Colby*, to assist the captain in keeping his vessel afloat until a certain amount of the cargo could be removed, and be placed in a position to work his vessel with his own crew. The *Rhode Island's* boat-crew remained on board the *A. Colby*, giving every assistance to her

people, until January 5th, when they went on board the store-ship *William Adger*, Captain Carley, by whom Mr. Brown and his own men were treated with every attention, and upon the arrival of the *Rhode Island*, the following day, they rejoined their own vessel. Mr. Brown speaks of Mr. Harriman in the following terms: "I cannot say too much in praise of Captain Harriman, who did all that could be done, and thought nothing of the trouble to which they were necessarily put by altering his original voyage; and although all he possessed was the schooner, yet he told me when she struck that he would willingly lose her in order to save anyone, and if he should lose his vessel and cargo he never would regret having taken us on board."

In his official report of the loss of the *Monitor*, Commander Bankhead said: "I must testify to the untiring efforts and zeal displayed by Captain Trenchard to rescue the crew of the *Monitor*. Every attention and kindness have been shown to us by Captain Trenchard and his officers, to whom we all feel deeply grateful."





## CHAPTER XVI.

### ON SPECIAL DUTY.

ALTHOUGH the *Rhode Island's* first experience as a cruiser had been attended with danger, and nearly resulted in the loss of one of her boat's crews, yet the plucky Rhode Islanders were far from being discouraged and looked forward to another cruise with eagerness. On Monday, January 12, 1863, they left Hampton Roads with the monitor *Passaic* in tow for Port Royal, where Commander Trenchard was to report to Rear-Admiral Du Pont for duty on the South Atlantic station. Commander Trenchard arrived at this port in safety, and on January 23d he received the following instructions from the Rear-Admiral: "You will proceed with the *Rhode Island* under your command off Charleston, and report for duty to Captain Sylvanus William Godon,



the senior officer present." The peculiar nature of the duty assigned to the *Rhode Island* will be seen in the note sent at the same time by Rear-Admiral Du Pont to Captain Godon : " I desire you to give the *Rhode Island* a station nearest the bar, so that a system of reconnoissance and soundings may be commenced in the channels. This must be done at night and with the greatest caution, in order not to excite the attention of the enemy. You are not only to obtain the depth of water, but the features of the channels, so as to enable the pilots to plant the buoys in *one night*."

On the day this order reached Commander Trenchard he received a counter-order from Rear-Admiral Du Pont as follows : " Notwithstanding the important duty upon which I sent you this morning, I have received a despatch from the Navy Department to send a steamer to Hampton Roads to tow the *Weehawken* to Port Royal. You will transfer the pilots now on board the *Rhode Island* to the *Augusta* to relieve you off Charleston." In a postscript Rear-Admiral Du Pont adds in his own handwriting : " You will not mention your destination or its object to anyone in your ship or to anyone off Charleston, as I desire it should

not be known to anyone but the senior officer present. S. F. D. P."

While in Hampton Roads, in obedience to this last order, the following telegram from the Navy Department, dated January 29th, again changed the programme marked out for the *Rhode Island*: "The Confederate war-steamer *Oreto* (*Florida*) left Havana on the 22d inst. ! She burned a brig off Matanzas and three vessels off Cardenas. She has probably gone to the old Bahama Channel. You will proceed in that direction with the UTMOST DESPATCH and report for duty to Acting-Rear-Admiral Wilkes, by letter, when possible. But your first duty is to chase the *Oreto* or the *Alabama*.—GIDEON WELLES." The *Florida* had just made her extraordinary escape through the National blockading squadron off Mobile, and ran into Nassau. She was built in Liverpool, exactly on the lines of the British gunboats of that day. The *Alabama*, on January 11th, had sunk the United States gunboat *Hatteras* off Galveston, and it was thought that she might be now skirting along the Atlantic coast. Taken altogether, the situation was well calculated to cause excitement in the little gunboat.

Immediately there was a stir of hasty preparations for departure that spoke well for the fighting qualities of the officers and men. The prospect of a brush with the *Florida* or the *Alabama* sent the blood of the Rhode Islanders tingling through their veins, and the order to get under way was obeyed with alacrity. The ship left Hampton Roads a few hours after the receipt of the telegram. Extra lookouts were stationed and unusual precautions were taken to discover any sail or smoke that bore the slightest resemblance to, or would give a cue to the whereabouts of, the Confederate cruisers.

On the third day out the desire for a brush with a Confederate warship seemed likely to be gratified.

This day, Monday, February 2, 1863, dawned with showers of rain and squalls of wind which made it extremely difficult to discover a ship more than a mile away. Soon after day broke, 6.40 A.M., the lookout reported that he had caught a glimpse of a steamer, through a rift in the fog, under sail and steam. From the peculiar appearance of the smoke it was known that she was burning English coal, and soon afterward, when the outlines of the



stranger were more distinctly made out, it was seen that she was of English construction. At that time the stranger was about five or six miles from the *Rhode Island*, and steering in a northeasterly direction. Descriptions of the celebrated *Alabama* and *Florida* had been placed in the hands of the Union commanders, and the appearance of this stranger conformed with the description of the former so perfectly (with the exception of the raking masts, which might have been refitted since the description of the *Alabama* was sent out) that everybody felt sure they were in the presence of the formidable commerce-destroyer.

Commander Trenchard immediately gave orders to get up a full head of steam, and in a short time the *Rhode Island* was bounding after the chase, pounding the waves with her rapidly revolving paddle-wheels, and splashing the foam behind her like an excited duck. Efforts to increase her speed were made by spreading every inch of canvas that the steamer could carry, and for a time it seemed as if they were gaining. Then again it seemed as if the *Rhode Island* was no more than holding her own, but after the chase had lasted five hours it was apparent to everyone



on board that the stranger was gradually drawing away. It was also seen that the chase was resorting to extraordinary means for increasing her speed, as the discoloration of her smoke showed plainly enough that her firemen were throwing rosin and pitch on the fires. The fact that the vessel had rosin and pitch aboard in any quantities seemed to indicate that the vessel was from some Southern port, whence much of these commodities came, or had received a supply of it at some of the alleged neutral ports or from some blockade-runner. In any event the Rhode Islanders were more convinced than ever that they were pursuing a Confederate craft. By sunset the chase was hulled down about twelve miles ahead. The *Rhode Island* continued the pursuit during the night with the hope that some accident might befall the stranger's machinery or that her fuel might give out. All night long the plucky little gunboat kept up the chase. The next day dawned with a clearing sky, but nothing could be seen of the stranger, not even from the masthead, and Commander Trenchard reluctantly changed his course.

At 6 A.M. a large sailing-vessel was sighted standing to the east, but as there was nothing

suspicious about her no attempt was made to get aboard. During the latter part of the day it blew a heavy gale, the wind suddenly shifting to different quarters, creating a dangerous cross-sea and causing the gunboat to labor heavily. Before evening fears were entertained for the safety of the cruiser. Ponderous waves broke over her, sweeping entirely across the decks, and washing away the forward section of her wheel-houses. Commander Trenchard was compelled to bring the head of the *Rhode Island* to the wind, and under easy steam he rode out the storm for the remainder of the night. Efforts were made to abate the violence of the waves by pouring oil on the sea. This was done in conformity to instructions that were issued to our officers to make this experiment from time to time. Commander Trenchard makes no reference in his journal to the success of this measure to calm the sea. By dawn, February 4th, the wind abated, and at noon the ship was on her course again. At 11 A.M., February 6th, Commander Trenchard boarded the British brig *Ella* from New York bound for Nassau. At three o'clock that afternoon he passed a large armed ship standing to the south and east. At 8.30 o'clock

that evening he passed Hole-in-the-Wall Light on Alico. At 11 P.M. he spoke the American ship *Stromboli* from New York to New Orleans.

Two days later, while cruising near the Old Bahama Channel, the *Rhode Island* discovered the smoke of another steamer and gave chase. This time the little gunboat was more successful and overtook the British mail steamer *Dashaway*, from Havana for St. Thomas. On the following day the *Rhode Island* boarded the English steamer *Pacific*, from New York for Cardenas. After boarding a Spanish man-of-war, the *Rhode Island*, on February 10th, put into Key West for repairs and coal. Twelve days later, on February 22d, being the anniversary of Washington's birthday, the cruiser was bedecked with flags, and at noon, together the flagship *St. Lawrence*, fired a salute in honor of the day.

The *Rhode Island* left Key West at five o'clock on the afternoon of February 23d and ran into Havana, where she found the United States cruiser *Sonoma*, Commander Thomas Holdup Stevens. At this place Commander Trenchard exchanged salutes with the Spanish Admiral and also with the town. In company with Capt. Daniel Boone Ridgely of the *Santi-*



*ago de Cuba*, Commander Trenchard called upon the Spanish Admiral, and in the evening they paid a visit to Mr. Shufeldt, the United States Consul-General in that port, at his country-seat. Mr. Shufeldt also visited the *Rhode Island*. The *Rhode Island* and the *Santiago de Cuba* left Havana in company, February 25th. These two vessels proceeded directly to the Bahama Banks, where they anchored in five fathoms of water, hoping to intercept Confederate blockade-runners. A number of vessels were spoken on the way with the expectation of gaining information as to the movements of Confederate vessels. On February 27th the cruisers got under way again and cruised to the southeast. At eight o'clock in the morning a sail was discovered to the east, standing to the northwest in the direction of the Great Bahama Banks. The American gunboats bore down for the stranger, and as they drew near her she appeared to be a very suspicious character. It proved to be a screw steamer, and answered exactly to the description the Union commanders had received of the Confederate commerce-destroyer, *Florida*. Believing that they had that vessel in sight, and fearing that she would cross the

Banks, thus giving the gunboats the slip, Commander Trenchard endeavored to cut her off. The two gunboats rapidly overhauled the chase, but it was not until they had reached the edge of the Banks that they came within gunshot. Commander Trenchard now fired a blank cartridge to induce the stranger to heave-to. This did not have the desired effect, and a moment later a shell was sent hissing and ricocheting over the waves just in front of the steamer's bows. This brought the stranger to terms, and a boat was lowered and prepared to be sent aboard the stranger. Meantime, however, the chase had lowered a boat, and, having previously hoisted the English ensign and pendant, came alongside the Union gunboats to explain her conduct. "It was not until she lowered her boat," writes Commander Trenchard, "that I could feel satisfied it was not the *Florida*." The commander of the steamer came aboard the *Rhode Island* and reported that his vessel was H. B. M. gunboat *Cygnnet*, Commander De Kanza. The British commander was a trifle indignant at the manner in which his vessel had been treated and demanded an explanation. Commander Trenchard expressed his regrets for the occurrence, and apologized for firing

the shell. Upon this, Commander De Kanza returned to his ship, and the vessels resumed their original courses.

Continuing their cruise in company, the *Rhode Island* and the *Santiago de Cuba* boarded several vessels, and at nine o'clock on the morning of March 2d learned from the people of an English brig from Porto Rico bound for Santiago de Cuba "that the Confederate steamer *Alabama* and the United States cruiser *Vanderbilt*, the flagship of Capt. Charles Wilkes's flying squadron, which had been detailed especially to capture the Confederate cruisers, had been seen in the Mona Passage on the 27th of February. In hopes of learning something more definite in reference to the *Alabama*, the *Rhode Island* and the *Santiago de Cuba* shaped their course for St. Nicholas Mole, arriving there March 3d. Commander Trenchard, in company with Captain Ridgely, called upon the Governor and other officials, and learned that Wilkes had left two weeks before. The following day the two American commanders called upon the Governor and took dinner with him.

Leaving this place March 5th, the *Rhode Island* and the *Santiago de Cuba* put to sea and continued to cruise in company, under a



clear sky, on a smooth sea, and with balmy breezes. When south of Cuba, at three o'clock in the morning of Friday, March 6th, they gave chase to a suspicious steamer, but upon coming up with her at 6.20 A.M., she proved to be a Spanish merchant craft. Commander Trenchard now exercised his crew at the great guns by firing at a target. While this was under way, an accident occurred that came near ending the career of the *Rhode Island* and her entire ship's company. The accident was prevented by an act of heroism on the part of one of the crew that has never been surpassed for bravery, and ranks the hero with Reuben James and other celebrated American tars who, by acts of personal bravery, have made themselves famous in the United States Navy. Commander Trenchard says: "We were very providentially saved from a serious accident. While the men were engaged in firing at the targets, a shell fell into the shot-locker, its leaden patch became detached from the fuse, which ignited by the shell coming in contact with other shells in the locker." Had the shell exploded in the locker the result would have been terrific. Realizing the peril, Master-at-Arms Richard

Luscomb seized the shell, with its hissing fuse, in his hands, and handed it to Acting-Master's-Mate William Rogers, who hastened with it to the deck above, and, at the imminent risk of being blown to pieces, rushed to the bulwark and threw it overboard. The heroic act was done so quickly that only a few at the moment realized from what a terrible catastrophe they had escaped. Commander Trenchard said : " We cannot feel too thankful for this kindly and providential preservation."

An amusing incident occurred on the following day which shows how a serious disaster might result aboard a warship in time of war from the most pacific intentions. Being anxious to get news of the Confederate blockade-runners' cruisers, Captain Ridgely, of the *Santiago de Cuba*, while still cruising in company with the *Rhode Island*, March 7th gave chase to a brig that was discovered to the south of Cumberland Harbor, Cuba. The only object of the pursuit was to obtain news, but the brig's people, finding themselves pursued by a formidable-looking gunboat, became greatly frightened and made directly for the shore, evidently intending to wreck their vessel rather than allow her to be over-

taken. Fearing that the master of the brig might carry out his suicidal intentions if the *Santiago de Cuba* persisted in the chase, Captain Ridgely gave up the pursuit and rejoined the *Rhode Island*.

On Sunday, March 8th, Commander Trenchard notes: "First part of the day, light airs from the south and east; latter part, light breezes from the north and east, and pleasant. At 10.30 A.M. performed divine service." Services also were held in the *Santiago de Cuba*. The calm of the Sabbath day was agreeably broken by the alternate songs of praise that were wafted in a light balmy breeze from one vessel to another. The peace of the Sabbath was broken about noon by the *Santiago de Cuba* giving chase to a vessel which proved to be an English bark from Santiago de Cuba for England, laden with copper. At half-past two in the afternoon the American bark *Casco*, of and from New York, nine days out, for Santiago de Cuba, was boarded. While running for this bark a very suspicious-looking vessel hove in sight. Commander Trenchard sent his men to quarters and prepared for action, but the stranger proved to be a Spanish steam frigate.





## CHAPTER XVII.

### LEISURELY CRUISING.

ON March 9th the *Santiago de Cuba* and the *Rhode Island* ran into Cape Haytien, where they exchanged a salute of twenty-one guns with the Haytian flag, after which Captain Ridgely and Commander Trenchard went on shore and paid a visit to the town officials. The next day the United States consul visited the National gunboats, each vessel saluting him with seven guns. On March 11th Captain Ridgely and Commander Trenchard visited the country-seat of a rich Haytian merchant some miles inland, where they were sumptuously entertained.

The little cruisers left Cape Haytien March 12th, and passing between Tortuga and Hayti continued their cruise in company. Touching at St. Nicholas Mole, and finding no vessels

there, they resumed their course southward under easy steam and sail, boarding a number of American, English, and Spanish vessels. At 5.20 P.M. March 14th, when abreast of Cape Filusan, a steamer was discovered inshore, but soon afterward, a fog settling down, they lost sight of her, but on the following day she was again discovered and proved to be a British gunboat, flying the blue ensign. The American cruisers fell in with this same gunboat the next day. Soon afterward they met the United States man-of-war *Vanderbilt*, the flagship of Captain Wilkes, and accompanied her into the harbor of St. Nicholas Mole, where she was saluted with seventeen guns, to which she responded with seven.

At nine o'clock that evening the *Vanderbilt* put to sea, leaving the *Rhode Island* and the *Santiago de Cuba* in port. Captain Ridgely and Commander Trenchard called on the local authorities and proceeded to sea on the evening of the same day. Commander Trenchard notes in his journal:

" THURSDAY, March 19, 1863.

"Light variable breezes and pleasant weather. While off the harbor of Santiago de Cuba, we spoke the English brig *W. A. Rodgers* of

Yarmouth, bound in from St. John's. At 12.20 P.M. we anchored in the harbor of Santiago de Cuba in company with our consort bearing the same name. We saluted the Spanish flag with twenty-one guns, which was duly returned. The United States consul, Mr. Wallace of Syracuse, N. Y., visited our ship, and upon leaving we saluted him with seven guns. A boat with an officer from the Spanish war-steamer *Blanco de Garcia* came alongside with the usual offers of civilities. I called, in company with Captain Ridgely, on His Excellency the Governor, and had a pleasant visit.

" FRIDAY, March 20th.

" Light airs from the east, clear and pleasant. I called on the commander of the *Blanco de Garcia*, who very politely went to quarters and drilled his men in various evolutions, with which and the general efficiency aboard the ship we were very much pleased."

The officers of the *Rhode Island* on March 14, 1863, were : Commander Trenchard ; Lieutenant, Norman H. Farquhar ; Paymaster, Richard Hall Douglass ; Assistant Surgeon, Samuel G. Webber ; Acting Master, Wm. Williams ; Acting Ensigns, Albert Taylor,



Daniely Rodney Brown, Douglas R. Cassel ; Acting Master's Mates, Chas. F. Ellmore, Calvin S. Wilcox ; Acting Chief Engineer, John F. McCutchen ; Second Assistant Engineers, Geo. H. Rutter, James L. Marshall ; Third Assistant Engineer, John Van Hovenberg ; Acting Third Assistant Engineers, Joseph C. Lewis, Greenville Lewis, Isaac S. Mench, Geo. W. Keller ; Captain's Clerk, Fanning C. T. Beck ; Paymaster's Clerk, Frank H. Deal ; Acting Gunner, John W. Irwin ; Surgeon's Steward, Wm. Chandler.

On Sunday, while religious service was being held on the deck of the *Rhode Island*, in the harbor of Santiago de Cuba, word was received that the *Alabama* had been seen outside of the harbor. Instantly every preparation for giving chase was made, notwithstanding the fact that the frail *Rhode Island* would have had a hard time with the formidable Confederate cruiser. Nothing was seen of the supposed *Alabama* that afternoon or night, but Commander Trenchard continued the search, hoping yet to fall in with the famous Semmes. Monday, March 23d, dawned with light variable airs. Commander Trenchard improved his time by exercising the crew in firing at a

target with the great guns, at distances varying from twelve hundred to seventeen hundred yards. At about half-past four that afternoon, while the crew was engaged in this work, a steamer was discovered, and chase was immediately given. High hopes were entertained of its being the famous Confederate cruiser. When the *Rhode Island* had come within gunshot, she fired two blank cartridges. As this did not induce the stranger to show her colors, the *Rhode Island*, when at a distance of about two miles, fired a rifled shell ahead of the steamer, when she hoisted French colors. Upon boarding, she was found to be the French packet ship *Florida*, from Santiago de Cuba for France.

Disappointed at not falling in with the *Alabama*, Commander Trenchard put back to Santiago de Cuba. On the afternoon of March 24th he started for a visit to the coal-mines in the interior, in company with a Captain Churchill, of Portland, Maine, and several other officers. This "land cruise" was highly appreciated by the officers, who had so long been confined to the narrow limits of the *Rhode Island's* cabins and decks. Commander Trenchard was greatly impressed with the good

order and generally prosperous appearance of the mine. He carefully inspected the process of crushing and smelting, and in his stroll around the works was received with every courtesy by the officers of the company. While the *Rhode Island* and the *Santiago de Cuba* were in this port the British steam frigate *Challenger* and gunboat *Steady* and the Spanish war-steamer *Blanco de Garcia* arrived.

As American cruisers were not allowed to leave an English port without giving twenty-four hours' notice, when by so doing they might capture a Confederate vessel, Commander Trenchard called on the Governor, March 30th, and notified him of the *Rhode Island's* intended departure.

The American cruisers left the place March 31st, and at daylight April 1st put into the harbor of Port Royal, Jamaica, where the English flag was saluted with twenty-one guns, and the British commandant with thirteen guns, which courtesies were promptly returned. While at this place Commander Trenchard notes: "I called in company with Captain Ridgely first on board the British commodore's flagship *Aboukir*, and learning that his quarters were in the dockyard I called there. We



found Commodore Dunlop a very pleasant person and were received by him most hospitably. The *Nile*, the flagship of Admiral Millen (commander-in-chief), and several other British war-vessels were in port."

The *Rhode Island* and the *Santiago de Cuba* left Port Royal April 2d and ran into Aux Cayes, where they called on the officials of the port and breakfasted with Messrs. Brown and Ross, the last named being the United States acting consul. The Acting Governor visited the ship and was saluted. The cruisers left this port April 4th, and on the second day out boarded the English schooner *Oriental*, from New York, bound for Aux Cayes. Although the vessel's papers were found to be in proper shape, she had no flag. The matter was referred to Captain Ridgely, who decided that the circumstances did not justify her seizure, upon which the vessels continued their cruise, passing several small villages on the island during the afternoon.

The gunboats then ran into Port au Prince, where the usual civilities were exchanged with the town officials. On April 8th the American officials were formally presented to His Excellency the President of Hayti, the Minister

of Finance, and other officials of the Government. Commander Trenchard notes : " The President received us in a very friendly manner, expressed his desire to cultivate the strongest relations of friendship with our country, from its having the same form of government as his own, which was destined to be one of the greatest of the nations and was located so near Hayti. A great many pleasing compliments were interchanged. He regretted not speaking English and the officers French, in order that he might have the pleasure of holding conversation with them. The President is a man of fine bearing, prepossessing appearance, and pleasing manners. The officers afterward visited the tomb of Pèthion near the palace."

Hastening from one port to another in hopes of getting on the track of some Confederate cruiser, especially that of the *Alabama*, the *Rhode Island* and *Santiago de Cuba* left Port au Prince April 8th, and in their cruise touched at St. Nicholas Mole and Cape Haytian, running into the latter port for coal and repairs.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### A ROMANTIC CRUISE.

WHILE at Cape Haytien, April 11th, Commander Trenchard, together with a number of brother officers, took the opportunity of visiting the ruins of Christophe's Castle, some twenty-seven miles inland. The officers left their ships at four o'clock in the morning, and after some delay in getting the vicious horses in a frame of mind for being mounted, they started out. It was not long before the officers found that however skilful they might have been at one time as horseback riders, they were sadly out of practice, as many a tumble and stiffened limb attested. The roads were found to be in a wretched condition, and several of the officers, including Commander Trenchard, were thrown from their horses. At one time the guides lost their bearing and



it was long before they regained the trail, as the miserable apology for a road should have been called.

After breakfast No. 2, at a lonely house by the roadside, about 10 A.M., the journey was resumed. Winding their way over a flat country, the officers came to the foot of the mountains on which the ruins of Christophe's Castle could be seen. Then the trail wound up through banana plantations, and by mountain huts. Passing through the massive gates of the castle, the American officers inspected the marvels of this wonderful structure. Christophe was the negro king of a part of Hayti early in the century. He became famous as having originated the system of monarchy by which his dominion was divided into dukedoms, the heads of which were known as the Duke of Marmalade, the Duke of Lemonade, etc.

Commander Trenchard gives the following interesting description of these ruins: "The largest and most complete of Christophe's garrisons was called La Fanire. It stood on one of the highest mountains of the island, distant about ten miles from Cape François, commanding a view of many miles of the coast

and of the interior also. This citadel, as it was popularly called, originally was begun by the French, who, after having laid the foundations and erected part of the walls, were obliged, from lack of materials or from the opposition of the negroes, to abandon the undertaking. From the immense height of the mountain and extent of the country which it commanded from its ascent (which in many parts was over huge crags and in others almost perpendicular), and from the ease and security with which an enemy might be thence repelled, it was a spot which offered the greatest advantages. These could not escape the observation of Christophe.

“As soon, therefore, as he found himself sufficiently at leisure to engage in an undertaking which would occupy so much of his attention and time, he caused the necessary materials for the building to be collected, set all the workmen and soldiers that were capable of rendering any assistance to labor, and generally attending in person, allowed little or no intermission of the work till it was completed. He furnished it with all kinds of ammunition and provisions, occasionally removing such articles of the latter as became damaged, and

considering it the safest spot in his territories, deposited in a secret part of it the immense sums of specie which had fallen into his possession. Europeans were not permitted to ascend this mountain or even to approach very near to it, nor could they, by making inquiries of the natives respecting the size of the citadel and its fortifications, procure any information at all satisfactory or reliable. Its outer walls, they affirmed, were eighty feet in thickness and of porportionate height; the provisions with which it was stored they declared were capable of supplying a great part of the army for some years. The ammunition contained in its magazines they represented as almost inexhaustible, and they further added that from one particular point no less than eighty pieces of cannon could be brought to bear on an enemy at once.

“ But though this account evidently was exaggerated, it was generally admitted that it was impossible for the strongest army to reduce it by siege or to take it by force. On account of its peculiar situation and immense height, this mountain is one of the most interesting in the island. It may be seen from a considerable distance at sea, with its citadel



towering high above the numerous hills by which it is surrounded, as if bidding defiance to any power that might be brought against it. It looks far more interesting and singular when, as is frequently the case in the early part of the morning, the beautiful white mists which arise from the night dews cling around the summit of this great mass of masonry, just allowing the summits of the neighboring hills to appear, leaving the rest the appearance of being supported by the clouds.

“ But on one of those peculiarly still, calm evenings which occur in tropical climates, when the usual breeze which had arisen died away, the clouds suddenly gathered, and collecting in wild and terrible confusion, assuming innumerable and ever-varying forms, the thunders burst forth in terrific and rapid succession ; the rain poured down as though the windows of heaven had been opened, and the forked lightning, intermingling with lurid flashes, threw a dismal and appalling glare on every object. In a moment, the citadel on which so much labor and expense had been bestowed was one heap of ruins. The ammunition lodged in it had exploded ; the stores it contained were destroyed ; of the specie, some

was thrown an immense distance, and some scattered on the sides of the mountain and out of the three hundred soldiers, only a few escaped. They hastened in wild amazement to Cape François to tell of the dreadful catastrophe. The first object of Christophe's after this accident was to gather up all the specie that could be found. He then selected from the materials of the ruined structure such as were still fit for use, and collecting others, caused it to be rebuilt without delay. Attributing the accident chiefly to the explosion of the ammunition, he now put only a small quantity in the castle, such as was necessary for immediate use. Strengthening and improving the castle from time to time, he at length rendered it a greater place of consequence and security than before." Commander Trenchard and his brother officers spent many hours wandering among the massive ruins, and then returned to their ships.

Leaving Cape Haytien, April 16th, the two vessels cruised in company between latitude 28° and 28° 30' north, and longitude 77° and 78° west, boarding and speaking a number of American and English vessels. About four o'clock on the morning of April 23d, they fell

in with a warship which, in the uncertain light of early dawn, could not readily be distinguished, and hoping that it might prove to be a Confederate vessel, the National cruisers approached with caution. The stranger, however, proved to be the United States gunboat *Tioga*, which sent a boat aboard the *Rhode Island*. The *Tioga* also was on a general cruise, and after an exchange of civilities she resumed her course, while the *Santiago de Cuba* and the *Rhode Island* ran into Key West.

While in this port, Commander Trenchard notes that the ward-room officers of the *Susquehanna*, on the evening of April 28th, "gave a party which was very generally attended by the ladies of Key West and the officers of the *Susquehanna*. It was a brilliant affair, and went off very well." During the next ten days the *Rhode Island* remained in this port, a number of social courtesies were exchanged between officers of other war-vessels and people living on shore. Commander Trenchard notes that on April 29th the army steamer *McClellan* came in with a prize in tow.

The *Rhode Island* left Key West May 7th, and put into Havana on the following day,



where she found the United States warship *Juniata*, Lieutenant John Mellen Brady Clitz, the *Somona*, Commander Thomas Holdup Stevens, arriving on the following day. In company with Lieutenant Clitz, Commander Trenchard called on the Spanish Admiral, who was in port at the time. The *Rhode Island* left Havana May 10th, and resumed her cruise, falling in with a number of vessels every day. On May 11th she met the *Octorara*, and delivering her mails made for Nassau.

While on her way to this port Commander Trenchard notes : "Thursday, May 12, 1863. Moderate breezes from the north and east and pleasant. At 8.15 A.M. made a steamer of a suspicious appearance to the east of us. We promptly gave chase, upon which she hoisted English colors. We fired a blank cartridge, as a Confederate vessel might have hoisted English colors as a *ruse* to escape. As she paid no attention to the blank cartridge, we fired a shell across her bow, but as she still continued on her course we fired several other shells, and pursued her to within three miles of the land, where we ceased firing, as the *Rhode Island* had got within four and a half miles of the shore.

We then gave up the chase (the steamer having anchored at Salt Key entrance) and continued on our own course for Nassau, off of which place we anchored at 1.20 P.M."

At Nassau Commander Trenchard had his first experience with the unfriendly attitude of the British Government toward the Northern States during the Civil War. Immediately on entering the harbor he was boarded by the United States consul, who visited the ship, after which the *Rhode Island* exchanged salutes with the forts, and also saluted the consul as he departed with seven guns. Commander Trenchard accompanied the consul on shore, and called with him upon the Governor. "The pleasure of this visit," writes Commander Trenchard, "was interrupted by the Governor expressing his intention of detaining us twenty-four hours to enable a Confederate vessel to go out. Upon consulting Her Majesty's proclamation we found there was absolutely no just cause for detaining us. We called the Governor's attention to this, so that he had not the satisfaction of keeping us beyond the few hours that were necessary to communicate with our consul. Upon the whole His Excellency was rather an agreeable person, and dispensed his hospitality

with ease and friendship. I called on my way out on the commander of the British warship *Baravata*, who had kindly sent an officer with the usual proffers of assistance. I had a delightful visit, and was glad on having met with the captain of the British gunboat."

The *Rhode Island* left Nassau May 12th, and on the following day Commander Trenchard notes: "First part of the day the wind was light from the north and east, while the latter part was cloudy. At 3.30 A.M. we discovered a steamer and gave chase. Shortly afterward we went to quarters and fired a blank cartridge for the purpose of bringing the stranger to. Upon this the chase showed English colors, but did not stop until a shell was fired ahead of her two hours later. She proved to be the English steamer *Corsica*, from Nassau for New York. The *Rhode Island* boarded a number of other vessels that day."

On May 13, 1863, Captain Wilkes sent Commander Trenchard the following instructions: "It has appeared to me that the presence of the *Rhode Island* and *Santiago de Cuba* may not be needed off Jamaica for a few days. It would be advisable for you to occupy the off-shore ground mentioned in my instructions to Cap-



tain Ridgely, now in possession of Commander Robert Davis Wyman, during the dark days of the moon coming, unless you have such other information as will call you to more important duty on the ground pointed out in the instructions recently sent you. Just at this time it seems to me all-important to prevent the blockade-runners from affording any aid or comfort to the rebels, and the presence of the *Rhode Island* and *Santiago de Cuba* may be of service in checking them from going forward, if not in capturing them. The dark nights of the moon should be the limit of your stay on the grounds to the northward. You will leave a report on board of the *National Guard* for me in regard to your action, that I may get early advice from you in case of my touching there, which seems to me very uncertain just now."

On May 14th the *Rhode Island* made the island of San Salvador, and Commander Trenchard took occasion to visit the spot where Columbus was supposed to have first placed foot in the New World. At 9.30 A.M., May 15th, the gunboat came to anchor off Fortune Island. Commander Trenchard describes his visit on shore at this quaint place, and his reception by the pompous, but distressingly impecunious,

officials of the town at some length. He first notes that he received a salute of *three guns*, underscoring the "three guns," as if calling attention to the number. The facts in the case seem to have been that the well-meaning islanders ran out of powder after the third discharge. The *Rhode Island*, however, promptly returned the salute with three guns. Commander Trenchard says: "The Justice and the Collector of the port came on board to pay their respects, there being no United States consul there. After this visit we went on shore, and returned the visit of the local officials. The justice, or magistrate, as he is called with us, gave us a very nice dinner, and the lady of the Collector, Mrs. Johnson (the only white lady in the town), honored us with an invitation for the evening, but as I had fixed upon 5 P.M. to leave the place we could not accept. The Collector insisted upon our visiting him in order that he might have the pleasure of toasting His Excellency, A. Lincoln, President of the United States. After doing ourselves this honor we put back to the ship, and got under way soon after 5 P.M., very favorably impressed over our reception at Fortune Island." In passing out, the *Rhode Island* was saluted

with *four* guns, a supply of powder very probably having arrived from the interior.

On May 16th, the officers of the *Rhode Island* exchanged visits with the United States consul at Great Magua, Mr. Sargent, and were entertained by the American residents there. The cruiser proceeded to sea on the same day and ran into Cape Haytien, where the *Santiago de Cuba* and the store-ship *National Guard* were found. Shortly afterward the gunboat *Chippewa* steamed into port.

On the evening of May 18th, while in this port, Mr. Eytinge, of the United States supply-vessel *Shepard Knapp*, came aboard the *Rhode Island* and reported that his ship had run aground at the entrance of the harbor, and was in a perilous position. At half-past ten o'clock that night, the *Chippewa* was ordered to go to the assistance of the stranded vessel, and at 8.30 o'clock on the following morning the *Santiago de Cuba* also steamed down to the scene of trouble. The cylinder-head of the *Rhode Island* being off for repairs at the time, made it impossible for Commander Trenchard to assist, but he sent his launch with a kedge and hawser. The *Shepard Knapp* was found to



be so hard and fast aground that the united efforts of the *Santiago de Cuba* and *Chippewa* were insufficient to move her. "It was then decided," wrote Commander Trenchard, "to lighten her as speedily as possible, and for that purpose lighters were despatched in tow of the *Chippewa*. The steamers returned and anchored for the night."

"Wednesday, May 20th, dawned with favorable weather. At 10 A.M. we got under way, and running out, anchored near the stranded ship. I sent a boat out to take soundings, and then shifted our berth nearer to the *Shepard Knapp*. The *Chippewa* followed us out. We got out a 13-inch hawser to the *Shepard Knapp*, and sent a number of our crew on board to aid in lightening her. At high water we made an attempt with a full head of steam to haul the vessel off, but without success. We remained by the ship during the night, keeping a constant strain upon the hawsers. The *Shepard Knapp* made a good deal of water, the wind freshening in the night.

" THURSDAY, May 21st.

" Wind and weather the same. The *Santiago de Cuba*, the *Chippewa*, and the *Rhode Island*

all engaged in assisting the stranded vessel to get off. A large number of the *Rhode Island's* men were still at work on board. The *Santiago de Cuba* and the *Rhode Island* made another attempt at high water to haul the vessel off, and after having parted the largest and best hawsers, we were compelled, with great reluctance, to abandon the attempt. A board of officers composed of Commanders Wyman, Andrew Bryson, and Lieutenant Farquhar was directed to examine the vessel, and ascertain if any further plan could be fixed upon that might result in getting the vessel off, and in the event of not being able to do this they were to suggest what had better be done with the vessel. Everything of value had been removed, but the ship had been imbedded nearly two feet in the coral reef. The board decided that no further means at our command would avail in getting the *Shepard Knapp* off, and recommended that as soon as everything could be removed, that her hull be turned over to our consul to be disposed of upon the best terms possible for the government, and that the three steamers, whose presence was so greatly required elsewhere, be no longer detained at this place. The steamers returned

late in the afternoon and anchored off Cape Haytien.

" FRIDAY, May 22d.

" The *Chippewa* proceeded to sea. We hauled along the *National Guard* and resumed coaling. One of our boats in charge of the master was sent to examine into the condition of the *Shepard Knapp*, and report to me.

" MAY 23d.

" I sent the second cutter out to the *Shepard Knapp* and found that she had bilged during the night and that her crew were still engaged in stripping her of everything that could be removed. We transferred the chronometers of the *Shepard Knapp* to the *Santiago de Cuba*, and the other stores saved by us to the *National Guard*. At 1 P.M. the *Santiago de Cuba* proceeded to sea, and the *Rhode Island* steamed out at 6.30 P.M."

In this run Commander Trenchard found that a joke had been perpetrated upon him by a British skipper. The first three days out, the *Rhode Island* experienced heavy tropical rains and light breezes. At 5.15 A.M., May 28th, the smoke of a steamer was discovered to the south and east, which proved to be the *Chippewa*, to which vessel was transferred



Charles Belknap, an engineer's yeoman, for passage to the Port Royal Naval Hospital. At half-past seven that evening, Commander Trenchard boarded the English schooner *Adelaide*, from New York bound to Eleuthera. The master of this schooner said that he had just passed a schooner steering north northeast, which was "heavily armed." Commander Trenchard promptly gave chase in that direction in hope of coming up with the supposed Confederate cruiser or privateer. Having reached a position, in which the schooner was thought to be, at 11 P.M. that night, Commander Trenchard banked his fires, and waited for daylight to reveal the whereabouts of his anticipated prize. Friday, May 29, 1863, dawned with light airs from the southeast and a clear sky. Shortly after daylight a schooner was discovered a short distance from the steamer, which was immediately recognized as the one reported by the skipper of the *Adelaide*. The *Rhode Island* in a jiffy was bounding after the chase, but on coming up with it the American officers were much chagrined to find that instead of being an armed Confederate privateer, she was the English schooner *Helena*, from Eleuthera for New York, laden with fruit.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### IMPORTANT CAPTURES.

THE *Rhode Island* continued her cruise under easy steam or sail, boarding a number of vessels and speaking others. Early on the morning of May 30th, while near Eleuthera Island, she caught sight of a steamer which, on closer inspection, presented a very suspicious appearance. The weather at the time was clear and pleasant, with a light breeze from the southeast. Commander Trenchard ordered on a full head of steam and gave chase. Soon the little *Rhode Island* was pounding the ocean swells with her noisy paddle-wheels, and perceptibly gained on the chase. The nearer Commander Trenchard got to the stranger the more suspicious she appeared, and this only whetted his desire to close on her. It was not long before the island of Eleuthera was

sighted, and it was feared the chase might run ashore. "By 12.30 P.M.," wrote Commander Trenchard, "we hoisted our colors and fired a blank cartridge. As the chase paid no attention to it, we fired a shell across her bow, and as she did not obey this summons to heave-to, we began firing directly into her with our longest-range guns, but did little damage. At about 1.45 P.M., our broadside guns being in range, we opened with them, and soon nearly every shot told. We soon noticed something like smoke issuing from the steamer, which we supposed was from the result of our shells setting her on fire. At 12.15 P.M. we ceased firing, and fifteen minutes later, the chase ran on shore and began landing the persons in her by means of her boats. At 3 P.M. we anchored on the edge of the reef some two and a half miles from James Point, island of Eleuthera. At the time we ceased firing the chase was about three and a half miles from the shore, and we a mile and a quarter outside of her. I sent Lieutenant Farquhar in a boat to ascertain the name and nationality of the stranded vessel. He did this and on his return reported that he read on the stern of the vessel *Margaret and Jessie* of Charleston, S. C. Lieutenant Far-



quhar had been directed not to board the steamer.

As Commander Trenchard afterward learned, the firing on the *Margaret and Jessie* was attended with far more serious circumstances than he anticipated. A year later he received the following order from Secretary Welles, dated

“ WASHINGTON, April 2, 1864.

“ A naval court of inquiry has been ordered to convene on Thursday next, the 17th inst., at the Navy Yard, Boston, for the purpose of inquiring into an alleged violation of British territorial jurisdiction by the United States steamer, *Rhode Island*, under your command, on or about the 30th May last, in chasing and firing at the steamer *Margaret and Jessie* in British waters.”

The trial was held, Rear-Admiral Samuel Breese presiding. A strong case was presented by the plaintiff, and it began to look like a very serious matter for Commander Trenchard. Finally, as a clinching evidence that the *Rhode Island* was within the three-mile limit when she fired on the *Margaret and Jessie*, the counsel for the plaintiff triumphantly produced a cannon-ball which, he declared, had been fired by the *Rhode*

*Island*, and had been found on shore by the inhabitants. The defense proved, however, that at that time the *Rhode Island* did not carry a gun of the calibre corresponding to the cannon-ball placed in evidence. The court speedily adjourned after this, exculpating Commander Trenchard of all blame. On November 5, 1864, this same *Margaret and Jessie* was captured while endeavoring to run the blockade, off Wilmington, by the *Keystone State*, Commander Trenchard's first command in the war.

Leaving the *Margaret and Jessie* to her fate, the *Rhode Island* again got under way, and resumed her cruise that evening. The next day she passed Alico Lighthouse, and between seven and eight o'clock in the morning, discovered a bark at anchor near Great Stump Key. On sighting this, she got under way, and hearing that the *Oreto (Florida)* had gone to Stump Key, Commander Trenchard supposed it might be her or her consort, the *Lapwing*, and so gave chase. The vessel proved to be the *Restless*. Overtaking her, he brought her out to the anchorage and supplied her with water, of which she was in need.

On the following day, Commander Trenchard boarded an American bark from Portland, Me., and transferred Acting-Master King and his prize crew to the *Restless* for passage to Key West, in order that they might join the *Tioga*. At 10.30 A.M. the *Rhode Island* took the *Restless* in tow, and when off Great Isaac Light, cast her off and resumed her cruise.

Speaking the Sicilian bark *Concertina*, from Havana for New York, June 2d, the *Rhode Island* banked her fires and leisurely cruised, in the hopes of falling in with another Confederate vessel, or better yet, with the *Alabama*. For several days beautiful weather was experienced, and a number of vessels were boarded or spoken. Commander Trenchard notes :

" MONDAY, June 8th.

"Light breezes from the southeast and pleasant. At 6 A.M. spread our fires and gave chase to a sail which proved to be the American ship *Seth Sprague*, of and from New York for New Orleans. At midday fell in with the *Santiago de Cuba*, four days out from Cape Haytien. Commander Wyman paid us a visit, and received from her the crew of the *Shepard Knapp* to complete our complement.



At 3 P.M., parted company with the *Santiago de Cuba* and stood on our course."

At midnight, June 9th, the lookout of the *Rhode Island* reported the light of a stranger. Commander Trenchard hastened on deck, and ordered chase to be given. About this time, the stranger seems to have discovered the *Rhode Island's* light and made efforts to escape. This only increased Commander Trenchard's desire to learn more about the vessel. At 1 A.M. he was sufficiently near to make out the lights of the stranger, when he became satisfied that she was a mail-steamer, upon which he gave up the chase, much to the relief, probably, of the commander of the steamer, who had been informed that the *Alabama* was cruising in that vicinity.

Most of the next thirty-six hours were spent by the *Rhode Island* with banked fires. At 10 A.M. on June 11th, having sighted a sail, she started ahead under moderate steam, and overhauled the English schooner *Dandy*, fourteen days from New York for Harbor Island. At sunset the *Rhode Island* again banked fires, and for the next twenty-four hours drifted aimlessly about on the ocean. On June 14th, she anchored off Watlings Island, where Mr.

Naime, the resident official, came on board and Commander Trenchard accompanied him on shore, "and the ladies of his family came on board afterward and visited the steamer." From this place the *Rhode Island* put into Cape Haytien, where Third Assistant Engineer French, being on the sick list, took passage for Boston in a schooner. Captain Eytinge, of the *Shepard Knapp*, also left the *Rhode Island* at this place, taking passage for the United States in a brig.

The *Rhode Island* was engaged in coaling at Cape Haytien until June 26th, when she put to sea. On June 23d the United States cruiser *Alabama*, having Captain Wilkes on board, had touched at the port and was saluted with fifteen guns by the *Rhode Island*. Outside the harbor the *Rhode Island* took in tow the chartered steamer *Hathaway*, which had on board a portion of the crew of the ill-fated *Shepard Knapp* together with her remaining officers, armament, etc. When well clear of the land the *Rhode Island* cast off her tow and the two vessels parted company. The *Rhode Island* made for Mariguana Island, anchoring at 6 P.M. for the night off its western extremity.

At ten o'clock that night, June 28th, Com-

mander Trenchard made the signal and rockets of the steamer *Ocean Queen*, and after boarding her and receiving the mails, he kept her in company as escort. At 9.50 A.M. the following day both steamers were stopped by signals from the land, and on sending a boat ashore it was learned through Mr. Sargent, the American consul at Magua, that Mr. Gislin, manager of an American company at Navassa, had been deserted by his men and left very ill, his situation being considered so critical that if not speedily relieved his life might be sacrificed. Acting on this information, Commander Trenchard hastened to the scene of trouble. Between 3 and 4 P.M., when in the Windward Passage, he met a Sardinian frigate standing to the south. At 5.30 A.M. on the following day he parted company with *Ocean Queen* and stood over for the Island of Navassa, and at 7.20 A.M. sent a boat on shore to ascertain the fate of Mr. Gislin. On the return of the boat it was found that he had left some two days before, for Great Magua, in a schooner sent to Navassa by Mr. Sargent to convey two men who were to look out for the interests of the company, and to bring back Mr. Gislin if he was able to be



moved. Learning of the welfare of that man, the *Rhode Island* resumed her cruise and on July 1st ran into Cape Haytien where she found the *Mercedita* and the *National Guard*.

The Glorious Fourth, 1863, found the *Rhode Island* at Cape Haytien. Commander Trenchard describes the celebration of the day as follows :

" SATURDAY, July 4, 1863.

" Light variable breezes, clear and pleasant weather. At sunrise dressed the ship with our flags at each masthead, gaff, and staff, and with all the signal flags, making quite a pretty display. At meridian we fired a national salute in honor of the anniversary of American Independence, the *Mercedita* participating in the same way and the *National Guard* as well as the *Mercedita* bedecked their rigging with flags. Captains Green and Ransom lunched with me, and Captain and Mrs. Spencer took tea with me. At 9 P.M. we illuminated the ship in honor of the anniversary."

Remaining in Cape Haytien until July 6th, the *Rhode Island* got under way and resumed her cruise among the islands, running down to Maraguana so as to meet the California mail-steamer *Champion* and escort her through the

"cruiser-infested" seas. "At 5 P.M.," wrote Commander Trenchard, "we fired a rocket and soon afterward got under way and ran out five miles and banked fire. At 6 A.M., July 10th, we were boarded by a boat from the United States consul for news." The *Rhode Island* escorted the *Champion* as far as Navassa, when she parted company and returned to her cruising grounds.

Touching at Cape Haytien for coal, July 12th, the *Rhode Island* passed south on the afternoon of July 17th, and anchored off the western side of the Island of Maraguana. Here a quantity of sweet potatoes was taken aboard, and at 10 P.M., July 18th, Commander Trenchard got under way to meet the mail-steamer *Northern Light*, from New York to Aspinwall. Two hours after midnight the steamer was sighted, and, after boarding her, the *Rhode Island* escorted her southward as far as Navassa. From the people of the mail-steamer Commander Trenchard for the first time learned of the fall of Vicksburg and the battle of Gettysburg. On the 20th of July, Third-Assistant-Engineer R. N. Flynn of the *Rhode Island* died, and his body was committed to the deep on the following day. The

*Rhode Island* then returned to Cape Haytien, where the *Ticonderoga*, bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Lardner, arrived July 26th.

In company with the *Juniata* the *Rhode Island* left Cape Haytien July 26th, to escort the mail-steamer *Ocean Queen*. On July 30th the *Rhode Island* met with one of the peculiar dangers of the sea. The day dawned pleasant, with light breezes from the northeast. At half-past three in the afternoon a waterspout was discovered moving directly upon the ship. Commander Trenchard immediately sent his crew to quarters and fired a shot from his 12-pound howitzer and also from one of the 8-inch guns at it. The accuracy of the *Rhode Island's* gunners was never better demonstrated than on this occasion. Both missiles struck the spout quarterly and had the effect of breaking it up. At the time the spout was sighted the *Rhode Island* was unable to get out of the way, of the danger as her wheels had been lashed for the purpose of removing the cylinder head, which was in need of repairs. Had it not been for the excellent marksmanship of her gunners, the gallant little cruiser might have had an unpleasant if not dangerous experience. It was not until twelve hours



afterward that the cylinder was replaced and the steamer again got under way. In the next few days the *Rhode Island* boarded a number of American and English vessels, but finding their papers correct, she did not detain them. Commander Trenchard notes :

" SUNDAY, August 2d.

" At 10 A.M. called all hands to muster and read the proclamation of his Excellency the President of the United States, setting apart Thursday, August 6th, as a national Thanksgiving in commemoration of our recent victories. Performed divine service. We were lying with banked fires until 1.20 P.M. At 8 P.M. banked them again. At midnight boarded the English schooner *Belle*, sixteen days from New York for Vera Cruz."

Early August 4th, Commander Trenchard discovered black smoke off the port horizon, and spreading his fires stood for the stranger under full steam, but as the smoke soon disappeared he gave up the chase. Commander Trenchard writes :

" WEDNESDAY, August 5th.

" Lying under banked fires. Started ahead about 9 A.M. and overhauled the English brig

*Rosina Claypole*, sixty-four days out from London for Nassau. After this we went to quarters for target practice with the great guns, firing two rounds with the port battery and one with the starboard after division. We ceased firing earlier than we intended at the suggestion of the medical officer, who feared that the noise might have a bad effect on the sick. He had previously expressed an opinion to the contrary. The target firing proved highly creditable."





## CHAPTER XX.

### CAPTURE OF THE "CRONSTADT."

AT eight o'clock on the morning of August 13th the *Rhode Island* started ahead under easy steam, and at 11 A.M. boarded the schooner *W. H. Tiers*, from Philadelphia to New Orleans, laden with coal. "Her commander," said Trenchard, "very politely sent me a very fine ham. Thanks to him, Captain Hoffman, for it." At 2.30 P.M. the English brig *Bayeas*, from New York to Nassau, was boarded, after which the steamer banked fire. On Sunday, August 16th, the *Rhode Island* made one of the most important captures in her career. The day broke with light breezes from the southeast, but about midday it became cloudy and squally. Shortly after church services had been held, chase was given to a steamer which had every appearance of being



a blockade-runner. As the gunboat gained, the chase ran toward the land, and it was noticed that a boat was lowered, and several men, getting into it, pulled for the shore some miles distant. They were the chief engineer and five of the crew. Overtaking the vessel, Commander Trenchard found her to be the *Cronstadt*, a blockade-runner from Wilmington bound for Nassau. On examination it was found that she had a cargo of 601 bales of cotton, 539 tierces and boxes of tobacco, and 270 barrels of turpentine. The vessel was registered at 292 tons, the value of the cargo being \$55,000, which, with the vessel, made a total valuation of \$200,000. Commander Trenchard notes: "She had an unusual capacity for so small a vessel. She was four years old and her two engines were two years old. Put a prize crew on board and took her in tow for the night, steering to the north."

At 7 A.M. on the following day, the *Rhode Island* banked fires and got the *Cronstadt* ready for her voyage to Boston by putting coal, provisions, and water on board. "Transferred Acting-Master Williams," notes Commander Trenchard, "to the steamer as prize-master, Master's-Mate Watson, and Assistant-En-

gineer Lewis to assist Mr. Williams, and Acting-Master's-Mate Rogers for passage to Boston Naval Hospital, together with some five or six in the crew. Mr. Jones, the first mate, the purser, and three of the crew of the *Cronstadt* were sent North in her to be retained as witnesses. Mr. Dobson, the owner and passenger, and Mr. Jefferson, passenger, together with the remainder of those on board the *Cronstadt*, were transferred to this vessel to be landed at the most convenient place. Parted company with the *Cronstadt* at 4.20 P.M., cheering her on her way, while we resumed our cruise." Commander Trenchard concludes his account of the successful capture by noting: "Lieutenant Farquhar dined with me in honor of the day." The *Rhode Island* ran to Harbor Island August 18th, where she landed her prisoners.

On the afternoon of August 25th, Commander Trenchard anchored off a settlement on the western side of Watlings Island, and Mr. Naime, the official in charge, came on board and made him a formal visit. Touching at various islands the *Rhode Island* returned to Cape Haytien, where she found Captain Wilkes's flagship the *Ticonderoga*, with

the *Juniata*, the *Santiago de Cuba*, and the *National Guard*. Leaving this place two days later, and passing Porto Rico, the *Rhode Island* came to anchor at St. Thomas for the purpose of repairing her boilers. On August 31st, Mr. Edgar, the United States consul, visited the ship and was saluted with seven guns. On September 7th, Commander Trenchard notes : " Called on Captain Sawyer of the Royal mail-steamer *Tasmanian*. Dined with Mr. Robert Swift, of Philadelphia, who is a merchant in this place. The Governor, our consul, and several other gentlemen were among the guests." On the following day Commander Trenchard dined with the Governor.

The *Rhode Island* left St. Thomas September 16th, having on board, as passengers, Ensigns Augustus G. Kellogg, Ira Harris, Jr., Walter W. Maclay, and A. S. Crowningshield, of the United States Navy. The gunboat arrived at Cape Haytien a few days later, where she was visited by Rear-Admiral James L. Lardner. Several invalid sailors and men whose time had expired were transferred to the *Ticonderoga* for passage home.

On September 28th, Rear-Admiral Lardner changed his flag to the *Rhode Island*, being sa-



luted with fifteen guns. He got to sea October 12th, and ran down to St. Thomas, after which he made for the islands of Nevis and Basse Terre. He anchored under the lee of the island of Maria Galante, where he banked fires for the night. The next morning he ran into Basse Terre, and the Admiral and Commander Trenchard went ashore. Touching at various ports, the *Rhode Island*, about 11 A.M., November 1st, when off the port of St. Johns, Porto Rico, picked up a boat which was adrift with a man in it, who proved to be a fugitive from justice. At 11.45 A.M. Commander Trenchard boarded a Spanish schooner bound to St. Johns and turned over the boat and man to her.

Running into Cape Haytien November 3d, where the Spanish steam frigate *Blanco* saluted Rear-Admiral Lardner with fifteen guns, the *Rhode Island* experienced one of those sad accidents which sometimes occur in a man-of-war. Commander Trenchard notes: "In returning the Spaniard's salute, just after the last gun had been fired, one of the guns was accidentally discharged, blowing a seaman by the name of Lewis A. Horton overboard. He was picked up by a boat and brought aboard, but both his

arms were found to be so much shattered that amputation was necessary." Horton had a singularly romantic experience in the Civil War. At the outbreak of hostilities he enlisted in the navy as a volunteer and was shipwrecked on the Bahamas. He entered another ship and was placed in charge of a prize with orders to make for the nearest port. In carrying out these instructions he was taken prisoner and confined in Libby Prison. When exchanged he enlisted in the *Rhode Island* just as she was about to tow the *Monitor* to Charleston. When the ironclad went down he was one of the boat's crew that became separated from the gunboat and for several days were tossed about on the ocean. At the time of the accident by which he lost his arms Horton was engaged to be married to a young woman in Maine. On the close of the war he returned to his home, but the young woman refused to marry him, remarking that she did not care to support a cripple. Her sister overheard the remark and, stepping forward, her eyes flashing with indignation, offered to marry the man. They were married, and the story of their remarkable courtship was told for many years afterward. Strange as it may seem, Horton did not receive a pension until

1888, the objection raised by the government officials being that his arms were not blown off in action. The objection seems trivial when so many less-deserving survivors of the Civil War have received pensions.

On November 24th, Rear-Admiral Lardner transferred his flag to the *Powhatan*, again reducing the *Rhode Island* to the station of an ordinary cruiser. She left Cape Haytien November 27th, to meet the mail-steamer *Champion* at the usual place off Maraguana, but a defect in the main steam-pipes of the gunboat compelled her to return to Cape Haytien.

From this time until March 17, 1864, the *Rhode Island* was engaged chiefly in escorting the mail-steamers through the channels of the West Indies, where they were most exposed to the attacks of Confederate cruisers. In the middle of March she received orders to return home, leaving Cape Haytien March 19th. Three days out the gunboat experienced a terrific storm, which she rode out in safety, and making the American coast, she arrived in Boston on March 28th. In her cruise in the West Indies she had boarded more than fifty vessels.





## CHAPTER XXI.

### CONVOY SERVICE.

THE fate of the *Monitor*, which foundered on the night of December 31, 1862, near Cape Hatteras, had made the Government adopt unusual precautions when sending other ironclads from one part of the coast to another, so that when the *Rhode Island* was ordered to tow the new monitor *Monadnock* from Boston to the seat of war, the steamers *Massasoit* and *Little Addie* were ordered to accompany her. The necessity for this precaution was forcibly shown on the second day out, when an accident occurred which might have resulted in a serious disaster. At half-past four o'clock, on the afternoon of October 7, 1864, the *Rhode Island* got under way from the Boston Navy Yard and stood down the bay, accompanied by the *Massasoit* and the *Little Addie*. Off

Boston Light they found the *Monadnock* under the command of Captain Berrian, who had preceded the *Rhode Island* down the bay. The *Monadnock* was the monitor, which, soon after the close of the war, rounded Cape Horn and demonstrated that the wooden navies of the world were doomed.

Taking the ironclad in tow, Commander Trenchard immediately put to sea with his convoy in company. The towing of a heavy vessel by another on the open sea is always attended with considerable danger. This danger is increased when the tow is a lumbering ironclad of the original monitor type. The unequal rising and falling of the waves between two ships connected by a tow-line brings a severe strain on the cable at one moment and at the next it may be entirely slack. Then the action of a heavy ocean wave may bring such a strain on the line as to break it, the ends flying back sometimes and striking the decks with terrific force. Should an accident compel the escorting vessel to run alongside of the monitor she would be in great danger of having her hull crushed in by being thrown against the iron sides of the ship.

It was the consciousness of this danger that

caused the commanders of the vessels of this squadron to watch the weather with unusual anxiety. Even before leaving port the barometer had been carefully noted, and had it given indications of an approaching storm, the departure of the vessels would have been postponed. But as everything gave promise of fair weather, the little squadron ventured out on the waters of the treacherous Atlantic. During the first night out, there was a light wind, and the sea was comparatively smooth, but as the men well knew that these favorable conditions might, in less than an hour, be changed into a howling tempest, every effort was made to hasten the voyage. By keeping up a full head of steam in both the *Rhode Island* and the *Monadnock* they averaged eight knots an hour.

Saturday, October 8th, dawned with threatening weather. The light breeze from the northwest at daybreak grew stronger, gradually whipping the smooth sea into white-capped waves, while the dark masses of fleeting clouds high up in the heaven gave indication of an approaching gale. Fearing that they might be overtaken by a storm, Commander Trenchard determined to run into the nearest shelter, which



was Holmes's Hole, and wait there until the sea had subsided. Realizing the danger of their position, the commanders did not slacken their speed, although the increasing sea made the strain on the tow-line dangerous. Shortly before noon an accident occurred which showed under what a severe strain the *Rhode Island* had been placed. While preparations were under way for the mid-day meal, the Rhode Islanders were startled by a loud crackling noise. The tow-line suddenly slackened, and being deprived of its guidance the monitor quickly fell into the trough of the sea. At that time the special preparations for fitting the *Monadnock* as an ocean cruiser had not been made, and her officers immediatly exerted themselves to bring the ironclad's head to sea.

On investigation, it was found that the iron bits in the *Rhode Island*, around which the tow-line had been wound, had given way under the strain, which was so great as to smash them into several pieces, one striking the binnacle and completely demolishing it. Noticing that something was wrong, the commanders of the *Massasoit* and the *Little Addie* ran down to proffer assistance. Every effort was made to get the tow-line in order, and in a few minutes

the vessels were again under way. By this time, the wind had increased to a heavy gale, and although it was imperative to gain shelter as soon as possible, it was deemed prudent to relax the strain on the tow-line by reducing the speed of the vessels. All four vessels were now pitching and rolling about in the heavy sea in an alarming fashion, while wave after wave broke completely over the exposed decks of the monitor and at times the spray dashed high over her turret, almost concealing the little craft from view. In this manner and with the expectation that every moment some vessel might be disabled, the squadron slowly made its way toward Holmes's Hole, arriving there about sunset.

Most of the night it blew a terrific gale, and as the officers and men of the little squadron heard the wind shrieking through the rigging, and causing even the protected waters of Holmes's Hole to roll and break against the sides of their vessel, they had cause to congratulate themselves that they were not on the dark sea with the cumbersome monitor tugging and dragging at them. About midnight the worst of the gale had blown over, and toward morning it had subsided into a gentle

breeze. It was some hours later, however, before the waves had moderated sufficiently to enable the vessels to continue the voyage, and even then, Commander Trenchard would not have ventured out, had he not realized how necessary it was to get the ironclad to her destination as soon as possible.

All that night and the following morning, October 10th, the wind was fresh from the southwest, and although at one time it looked as if it might again come on to a gale, the steamers held their course hoping to reach New York without further delay. The sea continued rough, and between two and three o'clock in the afternoon Commander Trenchard noticed that the *Little Addie* acted as if she were in trouble. During the gale of the 8th, she had behaved badly, and at one time fears for her safety were entertained. After leaving Holmes's Hole, although the sea had moderated considerably, she was observed to be making bad weather of it, and had it not been too hazardous Commander Trenchard would have sent a boat aboard of her. A little before three o'clock the quarter-master called Commander Trenchard's attention to a signal of distress the *Little Addie* was making. The



*Massasoit* was directed to run down to her; she learned that some accident had befallen the machinery. As it was soon repaired the vessels resumed their course into Long Island Sound, and about sunset anchored off White-stone, where they remained for the night. On the following morning, October 11th, they passed through Hell Gate, and about noon arrived safely at the Navy Yard.

Late on the afternoon of Friday, October 14, 1864, while the *Rhode Island* was in the Brooklyn Navy Yard preparing to renew her course south, the commandant of the Yard received a telegram from Washington with instructions to send the *Rhode Island* down to Aspinwall immediately, and to escort the mail-steamer *Costa Rica* from that port to New York. It was learned afterward that the Government had received secret information of a Confederate attempt to capture this steamer, and as she had important despatches and a considerable sum of money on board, besides a valuable cargo, she would have been a valuable prize for the Confederates. The mail-steamer *Ariel*, belonging to the same line and running between the same ports, had been captured only a short time before by the famous *Ala-*

*bama*, and was released only after everything of value had been taken out of her and bonds had been given for a heavy ransom. It was of the utmost importance to the Government to maintain this line of steamers, and when news came of a plot being on foot to capture the *Costa Rica*, the first available gunboat was despatched to convoy her.

A few minutes after receiving his instructions, Commander Trenchard was ready, and at half-past ten o'clock that night the *Rhode Island* drew out of the Navy Yard and, steaming through the Narrows, put to sea, leaving the pilot aboard the light-ship. On the third day out the brig *Monticello*, five days from Havana, for Camden, Me., was spoken. Moderate breezes and an easy sea were experienced nearly all through the passage, and the little gunboat sped southward, making the island of Maraguana at daybreak October 20th, and Cape Maji in the afternoon. Nearly all the 21st of October the island of San Domingo was in sight, and at six o'clock on the morning of October 24th, land twelve miles off Porto Bello was made, the town of Aspinwall appearing two hours later. The *Costa Rica* was found at her moorings ready for sea. While

waiting for the *Rhode Island* to coal, Commander Trenchard exchanged visits with Commodore Charles H. Bell, Colonel Totten, Captain Daveport, Paymaster I. W. Eldridge, Acting-Master C. A. Crocker, of the *St. Mary's*, and with the commander of the French war-steamer *Saone*.

At half-past eleven o'clock, October 26th, the *Rhode Island* having completed her coaling, and having Commodore Bell and Fleet-Paymaster I. W. Eldridge on board as passengers, left Aspinwall, with the *Costa Rica* in company, and began her trip northward, keeping a careful lookout for Confederate cruisers. About noon on the first day out, Commander Trenchard lost sight of his charge, and for some time afterward anxiety was felt for her safety. As the *Costa Rica* did not appear all that afternoon and night, it was feared that she would be separated from her escort for the rest of the passage. All efforts to find the steamer were unavailing until about noon, October 29th, when, off San Domingo, the missing mail-steamer again hove in sight, and the two vessels continued their voyage northward in company.

A few minutes after eleven o'clock on the fol-



lowing morning, the smoke of a steamer standing to the south was reported from the lookout, and as a hostile warship was expected at any moment, due precautions were taken aboard the *Rhode Island*. But on closer inspection the stranger proved to be the mail-steamer *Ocean Queen*, for Aspinwall. Between two and three o'clock that afternoon the smoke of another steamer was descried, and it was not long before she showed herself to be a warship. There was now a better prospect than ever of a "brush" with the enemy, and the plucky little *Rhode Island* bristled all over with fight. But, on exchanging signals, the stranger was found to be the United States steamer *Grand Gulf*, bound south. Passing a French bark at daylight, November 1st, the *Rhode Island* and the *Costa Rica* continued on their northern course without further incident of note, arriving in New York November 4th, the *Rhode Island* going to the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

The officers of the *Rhode Island* at this time were Commander Trenchard, Lieutenant Frederick E. Smith, Acting-Masters Charles O'Neil and Zera L. Tanner; Acting-Ensigns Robert Lampfare and Nicholas Pratt; Assistant Sur-

geon Edward P. Bingham, Assistant Paymaster William Lee Darling, Acting-Chief Engineer John F. McCutchen, Engineers Frank Henderson, James F. Powers, Charles W. Radell, Charles C. Black, William H. McCoy, John A. Hughes, W. I. Pattison, and Charles M. Rugg.

The *Rhode Island* remained in New York several weeks on her return from this cruise, a part of which time she was at anchor in the East River opposite Wall Street, having her batteries trained so as to protect Government property from mob violence. Commander Trenchard had received from Rear-Admiral Paulding the following telegram: "You will proceed with the *Rhode Island* under your command, and anchor off the foot of Wall Street, prepared to protect, in case of necessity, the U. S. Custom-House, Sub-Treasury, and other public property; also to render assistance, if called upon by the city authorities." Fortunately, the assistance of the *Rhode Islanders* was not necessary.

On November 14th, the gunboat prepared to escort the *Costa Rica* on her return voyage to Aspinwall, but at the last moment Commander Trenchard was relieved of this duty

by the *Galatea*. It was not until the afternoon of November 21, 1864, that the *Rhode Island* dropped down to quarantine grounds off Staten Island, preparatory to getting to sea. Toward evening the weather became so threatening that it was decided to postpone her departure until the following morning. Early Tuesday, November 22d, she passed Sandy Hook, and discharging her pilot stood down the Jersey coast. All day long the mountains of New Jersey were visible from the decks of the little steamer, and as night came on the lights of Cape May were made out.

Arriving at Hampton Roads at two o'clock on the following afternoon, Commander Trenchard found the imposing National fleet which was assembling for an attack upon Fort Fisher, and of which the little *Rhode Island* was to form a part. After saluting Rear-Admiral David Dixon Porter, who commanded the naval portion of the great expedition, with thirteen guns, which was duly returned by Porter's flagship the *Malvern*, Commander Trenchard got into his gig and paid an official visit to Rear-Admiral Porter. In his journal Trenchard says: "Paid my official visit to the Admiral and besides meeting him I had the



pleasure of meeting my very particular friend, Dr. Fox, fleet surgeon, also Paymaster Hieskell. We found at Hampton Roads the largest fleet ever concentrated there, among which were the largest ships of our Navy, the *Minnesota*, the *Wabash*, the *Powhatan*, the *Brooklyn*, the *Ticonderoga*, the *Juniata*, the *Tuscarora*, and many others." When Rear-Admiral Porter was assigned to this important command, he gave it to be understood by the commanders of the national vessels, that the economical use of powder was not to be considered in exercising the men at the great guns, and the result was that from the time he arrived until the great fleet sailed, there was a constant booming of the thousand or more cannon in the fleet, which, together with the imposing array of warships, monitors, and transports, made a most spirited scene.

As Commander Trenchard had been ordered to report at Beaufort, he sailed from Hampton Roads about dusk November 23d, and passing Cape Lookout Light at midnight, November 24th, he anchored off Beaufort bar. The following day having been designated by President Lincoln for a national thanksgiving, the crew of the Rhode Island was assembled aft,

and divine service was held, after which the President's proclamation was read.

The *Rhode Island* got to sea again the next day, and on Saturday morning, November 26th, she had an exciting chase after a supposed blockade-runner. A strange vessel was reported to the officer of the deck early in the morning, the weather at the time being pleasant with moderate breezes from the south and east. From the peculiar color of the smoke the stranger emitted, the belief that she was an enemy was strengthened, and every effort was made to increase the *Rhode Island's* speed. As the national gunboat rapidly gained on the chase, she was found to be not a Confederate but one of Uncle Sam's vessels, and after an exchange of signals she reported "U. S. steamer *Banshee*"; her commander, Captain Garfield, shortly afterward boarding the *Rhode Island*, and presented his compliments to Commander Trenchard. There was a mutual expression of regret that they had not found each other out to be enemies. An hour after this chase the *Rhode Island* exchanged signals with the U. S. steamers *R. R. Cuyler* and *Fort Morgan*, the latter having the Confederate Admiral, Franklin Buchanan, on board as a pris-

oner. Buchanan had been captured in the battle of Mobile Bay, and, after recovering from his dangerous wounds at the United States hospital in Pensacola, was on his way north.

For the few succeeding days the *Rhode Island* cruised in this vicinity, speaking the U. S. gunboat *Mount Vernon*, the *R. R. Cuyler*, and the brig *Anna Elizabeth*, and on the night of November 28th, passing a brilliantly lighted steamer which was found to be a mailship. The lights of another mail-steamer northbound were seen on the night of November 30th. About noon December 1st, the *Rhode Island* fell in with the United States steamer *Mackinaw*, her commander, Captain Beaumont, paying Commander Trenchard a visit.

While the two officers were engaged in what has always been a pleasant occurrence—a friendly visit on mid-ocean—a suspicious sail, or rather smoke, was reported from the mast-head. Both the *Rhode Island* and the *Mount Vernon* promptly gave chase, and in a short time the gunboats were cutting through the waves and making a terrible fuss in the water in their efforts to come up with the stranger. By 3.30 P.M. the chase could be seen from the decks of the national gunboats, but from



this time until sunset she seemed to gain and it was apparent that she was making extraordinary efforts to escape. At sunset the wind freshened and became squally, which caused a rough cross-sea to rise. This proved advantageous to the *Rhode Island* and she perceptibly gained. But soon after night fell over the sea, Commander Trenchard lost sight of the chase. After several vain endeavors to get a glimpse of the chase, one of the lookouts reported a light just off the bow which was thought to be that of the stranger. Steering in that direction and then maintaining her highest rate of speed for an hour longer, the *Rhode Island* came upon a vessel which seemed to be in a crippled condition. Commander Trenchard immediately sent a boat aboard of her. She proved to be the vessel chased during the afternoon, her machinery having been disabled in her efforts to escape. She was found to be the English steamer *Vixen* a blockade-runner from Bermuda. A marine guard was placed aboard of her, and her commander, Mr. Walton, was brought aboard the *Rhode Island*, while Commander Trenchard lay alongside waiting for the return of daylight.

At seven o'clock on the morning of Decem-

ber 2d, Commander Trenchard took the *Vixen* in tow, after placing Acting-Master Zera L. Tanner, Acting-Masters' Mates R. W. Wallace, G. H. Appleton, and Ensigns Smyth and Hughes, in charge of her with a prize crew. Mr. Walton was returned aboard the *Vixen* to be held as a witness in the trial, while the crew of the prize was sent aboard the *Rhode Island*. Falling in with her old consort, the *Santiago de Cuba*, the *Rhode Island* at 1.45 P.M. December 23d reached Beaufort with her prize. The capture was reported to the commanding naval officer who ordered the *Rhode Island* to proceed immediately to Hampton Roads with the *Vixen* and report to Rear-Admiral Thatcher, after which the gunboat was to join the expedition about to sail against Fort Fisher.





## CHAPTER XXII.

AT FORT FISHER.

AFTER spending several days at the Norfolk Navy Yard in coaling, the *Rhode Island* returned to Hampton Roads, December 10th, where she took on board, by order of Rear-Admiral Porter, Major Thomas Lincoln Casey, of the Engineers Corps, and Mr. William Anderson, a reporter of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Mr. Anderson was taken aboard by especial order from Rear-Admiral Porter, who said : " I beg leave to introduce to your acquaintance Mr. William Anderson, of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Will you furnish Mr. Anderson with quarters on board your vessel until you get below so that he will be comfortable ? When we arrive at our destination, other quarters will be provided." It will be observed in this note that the destination of



the expedition was not mentioned, it being referred to in such words as "below" and "our destination." Mr. Anderson evidently had been specially assigned to "cover" the attack on Fort Fisher.

At sunset the commanders of all the national vessels in the Roads were assembled on the flagship *Malvern* for the purpose of receiving their final instructions. Early the next morning the *Rhode Island* put to sea with the ironclad *Canonicus* in tow, followed by the *Fort Jackson* towing the *Monadnock*, and the *Santiago de Cuba* towing the *Mahopac*. On Wednesday, December 14th, the weather was cloudy and squally and the speed of the gunboats was reduced in keeping with the safety of the monitors. When the cumbersome ironclads passed the spot where the original monitor foundered, the *Monadnock* cast off her towline and demonstrated her seaworthiness by steaming independently of her consort. The *Fort Jackson*, however, kept close by the ironclad, ready to give immediate assistance if required. The six vessels kept in sight of each other all day. When off Cape Hatteras Rear-Admiral Porter in the *Malvern* passed them steaming southward and shortly after-

ward the powder boat *Louisiana* also passed them. Shortly after midnight the monitors made Point Lookout Light and at 7.55 A.M. came to anchor off Beaufort bar, the *Malvern* and the *Louisiana* having arrived a few hours before. During the next few days the crew of the *Rhode Island* followed the example of the other vessels and began firing at targets with the great guns. The target was placed about a mile off, the distance the vessels expected to take when attacking Fort Fisher.

Early on the morning of Sunday, December 18th, it was seen that some serious movement was under way in the great fleet that had assembled at Beaufort, and before noon Rear-Admiral Porter came out in the *Malvern* and put to sea, in company with a large number of vessels. The *Rhode Island* followed the long, trailing procession to sea, having the *Canonicus* in tow. By sunset the armada came to off Wilmington, many of the vessels standing on and off during the night and coming to anchor in the morning. December 19th was spent in manœuvring and in getting ready for the attack and at sunset the fleet came to anchor. Much difficulty was experienced in keeping the vessels in their proper positions, the swift tide

causing a number of steamers to drag their anchors. This, in such a great assemblage of vessels, resulted in much danger from collisions. The *Rhode Island* was compelled to get under steam twice, and finally dropped two anchors before she could be held fast.

Under date of Saturday, December 24th, Commander Trenchard notes: "At 0.50 A.M. discovered a fire bearing west by one one-quarter north, which was followed by an explosion at 2.05 A.M. It was the powder boat *Louisiana* which had been exploded under the batteries of Fort Fisher. The report appeared like two different discharges of a heavy gun and the shock like that of a distant earthquake."

Major Casey, who was in the *Rhode Island*, gives the following interesting account of this affair: "The fleet was concentrated for an attack upon the rebel defences of the New Inlet to Cape Fear River, covering one of the approaches to the city of Wilmington, N. C. The point of attack selected was Fort Fisher, and one of the means of attack decided upon as first to be projected against this work was the explosion of a large mass of gunpowder placed as near to its parapets as it could be



carried in a vessel, in the hopes that the effects produced would be the great injury, if not destruction, of the fortification, its armament, and garrison. The least effect expected was that the garrison should be so paralyzed and stunned as to offer small resistance to subsequent assaults. The vessel selected to carry the powder was the U. S. (purchased) propeller *Louisiana*, of 295 tons measurement, having an iron hull. It was decided to disguise her to resemble as much as possible a blockade-runner, and to endeavor to place her in the desired position without being discovered by the enemy. To these ends the masts and armament of the vessel were removed, and the deck-house extended forward to within a few feet of the stem to furnish additional room for storage of the powder. A sham smoke-stack in addition to the real one was set up, and the whole vessel painted a neutral tint, nearly approaching to white. In stowing the powder it was determined to place it as much as possible above the water-line, and a light deck a few inches below the water-line was constructed in the lower hold. . . . The vessel was taken to its position on the night of December 23d under the command of Com-

mander A. C. Rhind, U. S. Navy, and was placed by him, as he informed me, within three hundred yards of the northeast salient of the fort, and that, too, without being discovered by the enemy. A blockade-runner going in just ahead of the vessel acted as a guide in its navigation, and at the same time threw the garrison off its guard. After starting the various appliances for firing the fuses, the time of their running having been fixed at an hour and a half, and also setting fire to the combustibles collected in the after-hold, the crew escaped in a swift steamer held in waiting for them. The explosion took place in one hour and fifty-two minutes from the time of first setting the fire, and at about two o'clock on the morning of December 24th.

"As viewed from the decks of the U. S. steamer *Rhode Island* at a distance of some twelve miles, the first thing observed was a bright flame, which suddenly leaped into the air a height that would subtend some six or eight degrees of arc. This flame was filled with bright points or coruscations that made its appearance very beautiful. Some ten seconds after the appearance of the flame two sharp and ringing reports, about as loud as

those from a 6-pounder brass gun, and following each other in rapid succession, were heard directly over the point of observation. At the same instant the vessel was sensibly jarred and shaken, and upon one of the vessels of the squadron some window-glass was broken by the concussion. Immediately following this, a low, rumbling noise like distant thunder was heard in the direction of the explosion, and all was then quiet. The jar and noise of this explosion were apparent at points from sixty to one hundred miles removed from it—namely, at Beaufort and New Berne, N. C. Upon an examination of the fort the next morning, no perceptible effects could be seen to have been produced upon the work. The edges and crests of the parapets and traverses remained as sharp and well-defined as ever. The grass covering their surfaces had not been stripped from them. No slides or craters in the parapet could be observed. The stockade from the northeast bastion was intact, and the wooden barracks and other buildings about the fort were still standing. It is not believed that any guns were dismounted, and as the fort replied to the fleet for the first hour and a quarter of the fight upon the 24th instant, it



is not probable the garrison were so much demoralized as to unfit them for service."

"At 7 A.M.," records Commander Trenchard, "the fleet got under way and at 8.10 A.M., formed in line of battle ahead and steamed in for New Inlet. At 9 A.M. we went to quarters and cleared the ship for action. At 10.30 A.M., the wind having freshened, we came to anchor. At 11.30 A.M., the wind moderating, the fleet got under way again and steamed in for New Inlet. *New Ironsides* at 1 P.M. being in position, opened fire upon Fort Fisher, and in a few minutes the bombardment became general, each ship concentrating its fire upon Fort Fisher and other batteries. At 2.50 P.M. the *Rhode Island* reached its position, opening fire with the starboard battery. We dropped a kedge from the stern and swung the ship; then we let go the bower anchor, thus anchoring the ship head and stern, and bringing her port broadside to bear upon Fort Fisher and the Mound Battery, on which a brisk fire was kept. One of the starboard guns having been shifted to the port side gave us eight guns upon that side, namely, one 9-inch, five 8-inch, and two 30-pounder rifled guns.

"At 3.45 P.M. a shot from the second division cut away the flagstaff on Fort Fisher. About this time all the vessels had taken their positions and a most terrific fire was kept up by the fleet upon the batteries which appeared to be very nearly silenced, and Fort Fisher in flames. Had the troops only been on hand at this time they might have landed and taken possession of the works without opposition.

"The Mound Battery flagstaff was shot away two or three times but was speedily replaced by some soldier regardless of the danger to which he was exposed. The fleet sustained but little damage from the fire of the forts but a sad loss by the explosion of some Parrott guns. The Admiral steamed through the fleet in his flagship, the *Malvern*, during the hottest of the fire and directed its movements. The plan of attack was well arranged and carried out with no difficulty. At 5.20 P.M. (then after sunset) the Admiral made a signal to cease firing, the fleet weighed anchor and steamed out to sea. Our steamer, the *Little Rhody*, had not been struck, we sustained no casualties, and we left with grateful hearts to the Kind Giver of all good things for our preservation and safety. The fleet left for Beaufort."

Such is Commander Trenchard's modest account of the part he took in this celebrated bombardment. Mr. Anderson, however, the reporter of the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, gives the following: "From her construction the *Rhode Island* was forced to fight with her port guns (her paddle-wheels making it difficult to bring the starboard battery into play). All eyes watched her. She was headed in the opposite direction from which most of the Union ships were placed. She was admirably handled while performing the anomalous and dangerous manœuvre, her officers availing themselves of her sails as well as steam to turn rapidly. When half-turned, and with her stern exposed to the Mound Battery, a raking shot was fired at her. She was in a perilous position, but training the after gun of her battery she sent her compliments of defiance right up the sloping sides of the Mound. After a few anxious moments, she turned safely around, dropped her anchors, and poured broadside after broadside against the Mound Battery, until finally the flagstaff was shot away."

The fleet left for Beaufort between 7 and 8 p.m., anchoring off the bar on the following morning. The next day the *Rhode Island* re-



turned to New Inlet to assist in taking off the national troops who had been landed to assault Fort Fisher. Under date of December 26th, Commander Trenchard writes: "Got under way and stood in for the shore and anchored in six fathoms of water by direction of Rear-Admiral Porter to protect with our guns the troops which had been landed yesterday. During the night we kept up a fire at intervals of twenty minutes to the left and rear of our troops, the other gunboats shelling the woods to the right. The *Santiago de Cuba*, whose place we had taken, proceeded North with despatches.

"TUESDAY, December 27th.

"Moderate breezes from the south and west, and pleasant. Engaged in shelling the woods to the left of our troops, the other gunboats shelling to the right. Between 7 and 8 A.M. I sent boats to aid in embarking troops which I superintended in person. The surf being very high, this task had to be executed with great care by running lines to the shore from the smaller vessels, and in that way hauling the surf boats through the breakers to the larger boats by which the troops were conveyed to the tugs, and by them to the transports. A large number of

boats were sent to the different vessels and the whole number of troops was embarked safely just before midday. Great credit is due to the brave sailors for their strenuous efforts in this work, particularly those who handled the surf boats and carried them through the breakers. Before the troops had been embarked, a report came that the rebels had concentrated some six thousand troops within a mile of our own men, but the report was unfounded. The gunboats all returning to the fleet after the embarkation and the *Rhode Island* resumed her blockade duty."

Immediately after the unsuccessful termination of the first expedition against Fort Fisher, the *Rhode Island* resumed blockade duty, standing on and off the bar at New Inlet, and occasionally exchanging signals with the United States warships passing up and down the coast. On January 2, 1865, she dropped anchor off Beaufort and for several days was engaged in coaling from a schooner. Commander Trenchard, in anticipation of the second expedition against Fort Fisher which was about to be made, improved his time by preparing his ship for the expected bombardment. Probably profiting by the example of Captain Winslow

in the *Kearsarge*, Commander Trenchard obtained a spare chain-cable from the shore and arranged it so as to protect his starboard boiler; while sand-bags, spare rigging, and hawsers were arranged so as to give additional protection to the machinery. On January 11th a portion of the fleet destined for the attack on Fort Fisher got under way and anchored outside Beaufort bar, and on the evening of the following day the fleet, including the *Rhode Island*, got under way and at 9.15 P.M. anchored off Wilmington.

Under date of January 13, 1865, Commander Trenchard writes: "Light airs from the west with clear, pleasant weather. At 4.30 A.M. we got under way and steamed into line. At 7.30 A.M. we cast loose the battery and cleared the ship for action. At 9 A.M. the Second Division of the fleet anchored near the shore to the east of Fort Fisher and began shelling the works, the transports coming up and anchoring near, while the Third Division formed outside of them. The fleet lowered boats and sent them to transport and land the troops. At 10.30 A.M. the Third Division anchored near the shore to cover the left flank of the landing party and after shelling the woods for fully half an hour



discontinued. The steamer *New Ironsides* and the monitors were steaming up and when in range opened upon Fort Fisher and continued firing upon it for the remainder of the day. Line of battle No. 1 got under way and opened fire about an hour before sunset and it was followed by the second line soon afterward, keeping up a brisk fire until after dark upon the enemy's works.

" SATURDAY, January 14th.

"Light airs from the west and pleasant weather. Engaged during the day in landing artillery and mules belonging to the army.

" SUNDAY, January 15th.

"Light breezes from the north and west, clear and pleasant weather. At 6 A.M. the frigate line of battle got under way, and began getting into position to resume the attack on Fort Fisher. Acting-Ensign Zera L. Tanner, accompanied by Acting-Ensign Lemuel Post, were placed in charge of the boats to assist in getting the siege-guns belonging to the army, on shore. At 10 A.M., pursuant to signal, the marines and a detachment of sailors from this ship, under the command of Lieutenant Frederick R. Smith, accompanied

by Acting-Ensign Nicholas Pratt and Acting-Master's Mate, Edward E. Bradbury, were sent in boats to join the storming party from the fleet in the assault on Fort Fisher. At 11 A.M., we steamed into line and at 12.45 P.M. opened fire upon the batteries to the south of Fort Fisher. We kept up a continuous fire with the seven guns of the starboard battery. At 3 P.M. the signal was made to cease firing just as the *Rhode Island* had got in nearer, and in a position for her broadside guns to take effect upon the Mound or Battery Lamb (so named after Col. Lamb, the commander of the fort). At 3.30 P.M. the assault was made upon Fort Fisher, and shortly afterward the Stars and Stripes were seen waving over its walls. The guns from the Mound Battery were now turned (by the Confederates) upon the fort, and could we have opened upon it from the Third Division, the guns would have been silenced. The signal subsequently was made: 'to fire upon the Mound Battery,' but being nearly dark, not many shot took effect. Firing was continued upon it until a short time before 8 P.M., signal being made at that hour that the forts were in our possession.

" MONDAY, January 16, 1865.

" First part light airs from the south and west and pleasant; latter part breezes from the north and east. At 10 A.M. Acting-Ensign Tanner, with his party, returned, and at 10.15 A.M., Lieutenant Smith returned with the boats and the men under his command with the exception of Jeremiah Coony, boatswain's mate; Patrick Harrington, landsman; John Daisy, marine; B. Morey, ordinary seaman, who had been wounded and were sent on board the *Fort Jackson*; S. D. Tripp, landsman; Charles Wilson, ordinary seaman, missing; Frederick Anhes, seaman, Austen Benklin, ordinary seaman; Harry Devoe, ordinary seaman; James O'Sullivan, landsman. At 1 P.M. we got under way, and communicated with the Admiral, and at 4.30 P.M. took the ironclad *Saugus* in tow, and proceeded to sea with her, arriving at Hampton Roads, January 18th."

In his official report Commander Trenchard says :

" Lieutenant Frederick R. Smith, executive officer of this vessel, rendered valuable aid in carrying out my orders during the action and in getting the vessel into line. I have great



satisfaction in stating that all the officers behaved with uncommon coolness, exhibiting great zeal in the discharge of their duties and encouraging the men to do the same. The petty officers, crew, and marines, one and all, behaved well at their guns and other stations, discharging their duties in a spirited manner and maintaining a brisk and continuous fire upon the batteries.

"The *Rhode Island* went into action with nearly one half her complement, a party being engaged in landing siege-guns for the army, the importance of which service has been duly acknowledged by the general in charge, and another portion of the officers and crew, with Lieutenant Smith, were connected with the storming party.

"Acting-Master Charles O'Neil, in the absence of Lieutenant Smith in charge of the storming-party from this vessel, acted as executive officer during the action, which in addition to his own duty, he discharged with special credit.

"Acting-Ensign Robert O. Lanfare, the only divisional officer on board, merits praise, fighting his own guns and exercising a supervision over the others. Acting-Master's Mates Richard W. Wallace, John P. Fisher, Henry

B. Gardner, and George H. Appleton deserve special mention for the good manner in which their guns were handled.

“ I have also to acknowledge the services of Acting-Chief-Engineer John F. McCutchen for the skilful manner in which the engine was worked during the action, and further add Assistant Paymaster, William Lee Darling, acted as my aide during the engagement, and rendered himself very useful in communicating the necessary orders.

“ Assistant Surgeon Edward B. Bingham deserves mention for his promptness in looking up our wounded after the assault, and bringing on board for treatment all those whose wounds would admit of their being moved, thereby making more room on the hospital vessel for the more serious cases.

“ Captain's-Clerk Langdon S. Rogers deserves mention for the zealous manner in which he discharged the duties of signal officer on this occasion as well as during the action of the 24th of December. Paymaster's-Clerk, William J. Bennett, in charge of the powder division, merits a favorable mention for the careful and prompt manner in which the divisions were served.



"Credit is due to the gunner, Henry Hamilton, for the despatch with which the ammunition was delivered from the magazine and shell-room. I take this opportunity to bring to your favorable notice Charles H. Foy, signal quarter-master, not only for his services during the action, but for his uniform good conduct and long and faithful services. He has been in the naval service upwards of twenty years, over three of which have been on board of this vessel. I would further add that very great credit is due to the crew. Although short-handed, and having an extra gun on the starboard side, the battery was worked well and rendered good service."

Mr. Anderson, the reporter of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, writing of the part the *Rhode Island* took in this attack, said: "The *Rhode Island* came in for a double share of their [the Confederates'] warm attentions, her guns knocking one of their small batteries into pi. The better the Confederates trained their guns the nearer Commander Trenchard stood in for the Mound, the *Rhody's* guns entirely destroying the smooth parapets of Col. Lamb's pet battery. At last it became a duel between the *Rhody* and the Mound Battery until the



order to cease firing was given." Brigadier-General Henry L. Abbott, who commanded the land portion of the attack, paid a high compliment to Lieutenant Tanner in the following note, dated January 14, 1865, which he sent to Commander Trenchard: "I shall be under great obligations if you will detail Lieutenant Tanner permanently to take charge of getting my siege-guns and mortars on shore. General Terry is very anxious to put the same in position. It will only occupy a few days at the most, and it is a duty of so difficult a nature that I am specially anxious to secure the aid of so fine and skilful an officer as Lieutenant Tanner has proved himself to be *to-day*."





## CHAPTER XXIII.

### LAST CRUISES OF THE "RHODE ISLAND."

THE next cruise of the *Rhode Island* was marked with distinguished honor for the little craft. Soon after the capture of Fort Fisher, Commander Trenchard received the following order from Rear-Admiral Porter, dated flagship *Malvern*, Feb. 10, 1865: "As soon as you have discharged all the recruits brought down in your vessel, you will proceed *without delay* to Hampton Roads, carrying the mails, and report yourself to the Hon. Secretary of the Navy as ready to bring down the War Committee who propose visiting this locality." Arriving in Hampton Roads after the attack on Fort Fisher, the *Rhode Island* proceeded immediately to the Navy Yard and began coaling and replenishing her store of ammunition, which had been nearly exhausted

in the bombardment. This work was completed January 24th, and at 7 A.M. on the 25th, she cast off from the wharf and, steaming down Elizabeth River, communicated with the *Minnesota*, from which vessel she received instructions to proceed up Chesapeake Bay and towed the ironclad *Saugus* into the Roads. Commander Trenchard got under way at 9.30 A.M. and at 4.30 P.M. met the *Saugus* and towed her into the Roads, anchoring at 3.30 o'clock on the following morning near Fort Monroe, while the *Saugus* continued up James River to take part in the naval and army demonstrations in that quarter.

At half-past nine o'clock the same morning, in pursuance of the order received from Rear-Admiral Porter, the little *Rhody* was in her best trim. Her decks had been holystoned in the morning, the brass works were polished, and the officers and men had donned their best uniforms. At the hour named, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Gustavus Vasa Fox, Lieutenant-General and Mrs. Grant, Major-General and Mrs. Schofield, Brigadier-General and Mrs. Rollins, Major-General Barnard, Major Whany, Commodore John Rodgers, and Captain Twing, of the Engi-



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neers, came aboard the *Rhode Island* for passage. They constituted Porter's "war committee." A salute of seventeen guns was fired in honor of General Grant.

At 7.45 P.M. the *Rhode Island* put to sea with her precious cargo of humanity. The wind and waves were favorable for the great occasion, and the gunboat made a quick run down the coast, anchoring off Fort Fisher at 4.10 P.M., on the following day, near the gunboat *Fort Jackson*. At five o'clock Mr. Fox, General Grant, and all the other passengers, with the exception of the ladies, went aboard the little steamer *Errand*, and running in Cape Fear River, held a consultation with Rear-Admiral Porter and General Terry, after which the guests, with the exception of Commodore Rodgers and General Barnard, returned to the *Rhode Island* late that night. On recovering her distinguished guests, the *Rhode Island* put to sea an hour before midnight, and arrived off Beaufort at half-past seven on the following morning. Here Mr. Fox, General Grant, "and the ladies of the party" took a run into Beaufort in a tug, returning at 2.30 P.M., immediately after which the *Rhode Island* again put to sea and favored with ex-

ceptionally fine weather, steamed rapidly up the coast, passing Hatteras Light at one o'clock in the morning, and arriving at Hampton Roads at 4 P.M. Here the guests went ashore, expressing themselves as being greatly pleased with the jaunt.

After dining with Commodore Schenck in the *Powhatan*, Commander Trenchard, on the evening of February 4th, steamed out of Hampton Roads, having on board Lieutenant-Commander Thornton, Lieutenant N. W. Saunders, and several officers, besides 216 seamen who were to join various ships of the blockading squadrons. Arriving off Fort Fisher, Commander Trenchard notes: "Pulled in with the first cutter and called upon Admiral Porter, taking lunch on board the flagship *Malvern*, and returning in the afternoon to my own ship." On the following day, a number of the Rhode Islanders went ashore and visited the Mound Battery which had been such a conspicuous feature in the attacks on Fort Fisher. Commander Trenchard notes: "I was struck by the extent and great strength of the works which far exceeded my expectations." Putting her passengers aboard their several ships, the *Rhode Island* returned to

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Hampton Roads, where the mail-steamers *Morning Star* and *Queen* also arrived, bringing the officers and crew of the United States steamer *Merrimac*, which had been wrecked off Cape Canaveral.

The *Rhode Island* was at Hampton Roads on February 22d, and Commander Trenchard notes that the British war-steamer *Buzzard* uniting with the American cruisers in firing a salute at noon in honor of the day, and as Fort Monroe and the battery at the Navy Yard added their thunder, the Roads for a time presented a lively scene. While at this place, Commander Trenchard heard what, at that time, was regarded as "great news." Under date of February 20th, he says the *State of Georgia* arrived "with the news that Charleston was evacuated," the Confederates having abandoned the city three days before. Under date of February 23d he notes: "The U. S. steamer *Newberne* arrived from Fort Fisher bringing the news that our forces were within four miles of Wilmington and still advancing. . . . The *Newberne* brought the Confederate navy prisoners, who were sent to Fort Monroe." On the following day he says: "The U. S. steamer *R. R. Cuyler* arrived



from Cape Fear reporting that our forces had taken Wilmington, the rebels retreating and leaving a number of troops who were made prisoners."

On February 26th the *Rhode Island* took another run down to New Inlet with despatches for Rear-Admiral Porter. Commander Trenchard breakfasted with the Admiral, February 28th, and on March 2d, Porter transferred his flag to the *Rhode Island* and came on board with his son Essex, a lieutenant in the first artillery. While again elevated to the dignity of flagship the *Rhode Island* performed a gallant service. She left New Inlet at 8.30 A.M. and put to sea, the weather being cloudy and the breeze light from the north and east. At 10 A.M., when off Cape Lookout Shoals, a schooner was discovered showing signals of distress. Commander Trenchard stood in for her as near as the shoaling waters would allow, and he hove-to, lowered a boat, and sent it in charge of Acting-Ensign Nicholas Pratt to the assistance of the schooner. With no little danger to themselves the boat's crew reached the schooner and found that her people were nearly dead from exposure to the wet and cold. They had been in their perilous

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positions three nights and two days. The schooner proved to be the *Spray*, of Great Egg Harbor, N. J., from Fort Monroe, bound for Beaufort, laden with coal for the army. She had run on the shoals three nights before, and being exposed to the full force of the waves, in a short time began to fall to pieces. Her men finally were driven to the bowsprit and jibboom, from which they were rescued by the *Rhode Island's* boat. They were Israel G. Adams, master; Hezekiah Lee, mate; Elisha Jackson, steward; William Henderson, Thomas H. Beaumont, and Moses Minks, seamen. These men were taken aboard the *Rhode Island*, where they were received with every kindness. The gunboat resumed her course for Hampton Roads at 5.50 P.M., where she arrived on the afternoon of March 4th, Rear-Admiral Porter transferring his flag to the U. S. steamer *Bat* and proceeded to Baltimore.

Having passed through the war with much credit to herself and her officers the little *Rhode Island* now began to taste the sweets of victory. Compliments and receptions were lavishly bestowed on the returning sailors and soldiers after the war was over, and it is only

fair to say that our doughty gunboat came in for her full share of the laurels. Early in March, Commander Trenchard got a leave of absence and running up to Philadelphia was warmly greeted by his many friends. Returning from this brief furlough he rejoined his ship, and on March 20th, accompanied by the ironclad *Dictator*, put to sea, escorting her as far as New York. Here he received the following order from Secretary Welles: "As soon as the *Rhode Island* is ready for sea, proceed with her to the coast of Maine for the purpose of recruiting men for the navy. You will first visit the port of Belfast. The bureau of Equipment and Recruiting will furnish you with all the necessary instructions respecting recruiting service."

Proceeding immediately to Belfast, the *Rhode Island*, on March 31st, was visited by the mayor of the city and a large number of ladies and gentlemen who undoubtedly said some very wise things about seamanship in general, and about the *Rhode Island* in particular. Indeed, the little gunboat was an object of great interest during her entire stay, and her veteran seamen had some most marvellous yarns to tell to the crowds of credulous



townsfolk that visited her. These people came on board devoutly prepared to believe everything and anything about the ship, for the plucky little *Rhode Island*, with her pert, defiant pug-nose of a bowsprit, was just the craft to capture the fancy of landlubbers. It would not have been strange if her timbers did groan at some of the dreadfully strained yarns that were told about her performances by some of her straight-faced Jack tars who delighted in showing the visitors over the ship.

"And did this dear old ship really cross right over an island and resume the chase after the rebel pirate on the other side?" rapturously asked an enthusiastic maiden of a weather-beaten rascal of a tar, after he had explained how the paddle-wheels could propel as well on land as on sea.

"That's what she did, marm, and if that ain't so, you can call me a liar," replied the tar, and the exploit was vociferously discussed in the sewing-circles all that summer and the following winter.

The people of the *Rhode Island* were not altogether indifferent to the lavish admiration that was bestowed upon them. Your genuine old salt is a modest fellow as a rule, and in

the presence of his fellow-seamen is far from presuming on their credulity. But once let him loose in a crowd of landsfolk (particularly when they are really more willing to hear untruths than truths, so long as they can marvel) and the very bounds of imagination are shattered in his wild reach after the marvellous and impossible. And the worst feature of it all is that if Jack remains in these enervating surroundings too long, his capacity for telling the truth seems to disappear entirely, and he soon becomes a confirmed and hopeless prevaricator in all matters pertaining to the sea. The honest tars of the *Rhode Island* took exquisite delight in spinning yarns to the wondering people from the shore, and it was simply appalling to observe what immense chunks of falsehood were added to a yarn on each repetition.

The climax of this delirious state of enjoyment was reached when the little *Rhody* got an opportunity to fire off her big guns. It's all well enough to tell stories of wonderful deeds of heroism to credulous landsfolk, but there is nothing like the heavy boom of a real gun to give the yarn its proper emphasis and full weight in the minds of the hearers. This ad-

ditional tickle was afforded Jack on April 3d, when the *Rhode Island* had been in port several days. By that time popular interest in the gunboat had reached its height, and the people's power of believing everything and anything had reached the limit of endurance, if, indeed, it had not begun to flag a bit. So that the discharge of real guns, guns that had been actually fired in earnest, came just at the right time to give the festival of untruths an additional zest.

The pretext for firing the guns was afforded on April 3d, when the news came that Richmond had fallen. It is true that this was not much of a pretext, for the Rhode Islanders had learned of the surrender of New Orleans, Vicksburg, Mobile, and Charleston, without indulging in such a lavish outlay of gunpowder. But how could it be possible for a gallant son of Old Neptune to refuse the entreaties to hear those "dreadful guns" go off? So on April 3d, the gunboat was bedecked with bunting, and promptly at 1 P.M. the guns began to boom away. It was astonishing to observe what a martial effect it inspired, not only among the townsfolk, but among the seamen. The stern cast of countenance that was ob-



served to fall suddenly over the crew was soul-stirring. The martial strut of the young officers (when not interrupted by tripping over their own swords) around the decks, the abnormally distended chests, the over-erect heads, and their solemn countenances were sublimely suggestive of the "Dead March in Saul." As the cannon banged away, splitting the air with their murderous noise, the seamen assumed poses becoming a man-o'-war's man in the heat of action. Some looked scowlingly over the bulwarks at an imaginary foe; others with set teeth looked straight ahead at nothing, as if expecting a mortal wound at any instant; others surveyed the groups of half-startled young men and cowering maidens, stopping their ears with their hands, with a pitying smile, as if to say, "Oh, this is nothing; you ought to have heard those guns at Fort Fisher."

In return for this sweet taste of war the townsfolk vied with each other in entertaining the gallant Rhodies whenever they appeared on shore. The officers were handsomely dined and wined (or, more accurately speaking, cided) at the houses of society, while Jack was lionized by the ubiquitous small boy and one

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of the two or three "men about town"—all that slow-going Belfast could boast of. When the news of Lee's surrender, April 10th, was received, the climax of Jack's delicious revery was reached. The order was given to man the yards. Up scrambled Jack to the dizzy heights (as dizzy as the stumpy masts of the little *Rhody* would permit), and at the signal gave three times three hearty cheers before the admiring thousands on shore. This was followed up by again bedecking the ship with bunting, firing a salute of twenty-one guns, and at night illuminating with lanterns. The city also was illuminated, and a great mass-meeting was held at Pierce's Hall, at which the Rhode Islanders "exchanged congratulations with the townsfolk over the fall of Richmond, the surrender of Lee and his army, and the downfall of the rebellion," so that Jack literally retired that night in a blaze of glory.

In the midst of these scenes of festivities came the appalling news of the assassination of President Lincoln. On April 18th, Commander Trenchard assembled his officers and men at muster, and read general order No. 51, which concluded with these words: "The officers of the Navy and Marine Corps will,

as a manifestation of their respect for the exalted character, eminent position, and inestimable public services of the late President, and as an indication of their sense of the calamity which the country has sustained, wear the usual badge of mourning for six months. The Department further directs that upon the day following the receipt of this order, the commandants of squadrons, navy yards, and stations will cause the ensign of every vessel in their several commands to be hoisted at half-mast and a gun to be fired every half-hour, beginning at sunrise and ending at sunset. The flags of the several navy yards and marine barracks will also be hoisted at half-mast." On the following day the officers and men who could be spared from the ship attended services at the First Unitarian Church.

The *Rhode Island's* pleasant stay at Belfast was cut short by an order from Secretary Welles, dated April 18, 1865, which said: "Naval recruiting, except to persons holding honorable discharges, has been suspended for the present. You will proceed to New York and put the men you have enlisted for three years on board the receiving-ship, and receive



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on board as large a draft as the *Rhode Island* can carry of men having a year more or less to serve, whom you will take to the West Gulf Squadron at Mobile or Pensacola. Having delivered the draft you will return to New York without delay."

Amid many Godspeeds and with waving of handkerchiefs the *Rhode Island* left Belfast, April 24th, bound for New York. The gunboat arrived in New York and on April 30th put to sea. On May 3d, Commander Trenchard ran into Charleston, where for the first time in four years he had the pleasure of seeing Old Glory waving from the battered ramparts of Fort Sumter. The touching sight is noted by Commander Trenchard as follows: "At 11.45 A.M. I sent an officer in with the pilot-boat to convey despatches to Rear-Admiral Dahlgren, and upon the officer returning, between 3 and 4 P.M., we got under way. The squadron off Charleston was rejoicing over the late victories by saluting, dressing the ships, etc. It was truly a pleasing sight to behold our good old flag waving over the walls of Sumter and the other forts."

Rapidly skirting along the Florida coast, touching at the principal ports with which she

became so familiar during the war, the *Rhode Island* on May 5th, while near Carrysford Light, fell in with one of her old friends, namely, a reef. The vessel struck lightly and fortunately sustained no serious damage. Dropping anchor in Mobile Bay, Commander Trenchard got into his barge and pulled up to the city, where he delivered despatches to Rear-Admiral Thatcher, commanding the West Gulf Squadron. In returning down the bay, Commander Trenchard notes : "We had a fine view of the fortifications, their extent, and the obstructions in the river, which were much greater than I had imagined." Transferring a number of her officers to the vessels of this squadron, and taking on board others in their place, the *Rhode Island* proceeded northward and arrived at Hampton Roads, May 22d, bringing the news that St. Marks and Tallahassee, Fla., had surrendered to the Union forces on the 9th. From Hampton Roads the *Rhode Island* made her way to New York, reaching the Navy Yard May 23d, where the supernumeraries were sent to the receiving-ship *North Carolina*, and the invalids to the hospital.

To people living in the city a trip to Cen-

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tral Park is a matter of no special significance, but to the sailor just returned from long service on the ocean, the sight of the green lawns and carefully trimmed shrubbery is one of exquisite delight. It so proved to Commander Trenchard, who visited the park with his family soon after his return from his last cruise. He notes: "Paid a visit to Central Park in company with my family and enjoyed the ride through its beautiful grounds exceedingly. Found that great improvement had taken place since our former visit. It is indeed a lovely spot, and in course of time will vie with the finest parks in the world."

The following order, dated May 27, 1865, sent the *Rhode Island* again to sea: "Proceed with the *Rhode Island* to Mariguana Passage and relieve Commander Patterson as senior officer of the convoy service fleet. The *Tacoma* has recently sailed from New York to report for duty as one of the convoy fleet, and the *Seneca* will sail shortly under similar orders. The *Galatea*, now on this duty, is represented as being in a bad condition, and should be sent to New York as soon as her services can be spared. It is not likely that this convoy service will be required much longer. The coal



depot of the fleet is at Cape Haytien. Orders for the *James Adger* to return to New York on being relieved by the *Rhode Island* herewith transmitted."

The *Rhode Island* left New York for Cape Haytien, June 4th. At 10.20 A.M. of the 9th, a strange sail was sighted to the south-southeast, and after an hour of hard chasing, it was overtaken and found to be the English steamer *Montezuma*. On arriving at Cape Haytien, where he found the United States vessel *James Adger*, Commander Patterson, and the *Galatea*, Commander Nicholson, Commander Trenchard noticed that a marked change had come over the bearing of the British officials toward American officers. Early in the war the *Rhode Island* had been received with scant courtesy, while the Confederates had been entertained with lavish hospitality. The day following the *Rhode Island's* arrival at Cape Haytien the British cruiser *Lily*, Captain Henage, came in from Port-au-Prince, her commander making a call on Commander Trenchard a few hours later. In response to the cordial invitation of Captain Henage, Commanders Trenchard and Patterson went aboard the *Lily* the next day. On the follow-



ing Sunday Captain Henage, in company with Mr. Dutton, the English consul, visited the *Rhode Island* and attended divine service. The next day Mr. Dutton again paid a visit to the *Rhode Island*, and on leaving was saluted with seven guns.

At this time a revolution was under way at Cape Haytien and fears were entertained for the safety of the foreign residents. For their protection a detachment of the *Rhode Island's* marines was landed, together with a detachment from the *Galatea*, for the protection of the American consulate. Leaving these men ashore, the *Rhode Island* put to sea June 20th for the purpose of escorting the mail-steamer *Costa Rica* through that part of the West Indies and also for receiving from her letters and mail from New York. The *Rhode Island* fell in with the *Costa Rica* off the northwest point of Mariguana Island, and after receiving a supply of ice and the mails, convoyed her to the island of Navassa, and then returned to Cape Haytien.

Commander Trenchard now learned that friction had been excited between the natives and the foreign population on account of the landing of the marines. The American bark

*Abdel Kedar*, laden with coal for the squadron, had recently arrived from Philadelphia, and as a precautionary measure a boat, under the orders of Acting-Ensign Robert O. Lanfare, with eighteen armed blue-jackets and two marines, was sent to take a party of American ladies on board the *Abdel Kedar*, as it was deemed unsafe for them to remain on shore. On Sunday, July 2d, Commander Trenchard landed one hundred armed men from his ship for the protection of the consulate, which was threatened by the excited populace. A similar detachment was landed from the *Lily* under Captain Henage, the two divisions joining forces in the public square.

This movement gave rise to the rumor among the natives that the Americans and English were about to take the town by assault. The natives consequently rapidly concentrated their forces for the purpose of making an attack, and for a time it looked very much as if a battle might be precipitated. Fortunately the officers on both sides were cool enough to await explanations, and when assured that the only object of the Americans and English was to protect their consulates the "Committee of Public Safety" admitted their right to do



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this, but suggested that the seamen be withdrawn and a guard of only twenty men be left at each consulate. As the Committee of Public Safety agreed to furnish a guard of honor, and promised that the consulates would not be molested, the sailors were re-embarked.

For the next week or so, the officers of the warships at Cape Haytien watched the battle between the Government and insurgents, the latter replying only at long intervals on account of the short supply of gunpowder, occasioned by the explosion of their magazine, July 15th. At 8.30 P.M., July 19th, the people in the *Rhode Island* were attracted by sharp musketry firing on shore, which was continued until nearly midnight. It was ascertained afterward that some refugees had attempted to escape from the consulate. Some of them had succeeded in securing a boat and were pushing off when they were fired upon by the guard. This so frightened the refugees that they returned to the shore, when they were seized by the guards and on being taken to the Palace Square were shot. "A most brutal act," wrote Commander Trenchard. On the morning of July 22d, the *Rhode Island's* guard, stationed at the American consulate under the order of

Acting-Ensign Lanfare, was recalled to the ship.

The following order from the Secretary of the Navy, dated June 24th, 1865, ended the career of the *Rhode Island* as a cruiser : "The continuance of the convoy service is unnecessary ; therefore order the *Galatea* to Philadelphia and proceed with the *Rhode Island* to New York." In pursuance of this order the *Rhode Island*, on the evening of July 22d, left Cape Haytien and began her final homeward passage. Arriving at New York it was found that fever had broken out in the ship's company, it having been brought aboard by the men who had been sent on shore for guard duty. After being quarantined, the *Rhode Island* was allowed to proceed to the Navy Yard, and two years later she was sold to her original owners, the steamboat company running between New York and Charleston.





## CHAPTER XXIV.

### CLOSING SCENES.

HAVING passed through the Civil War in the most creditable manner, Commander Trenchard nearly met death in a most prosaic way. On the close of the war, he was appointed executive officer of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and on September 9, 1865, while in a picket-boat in the East River, he witnessed a collision between a ferry-boat and an English steamer. Observing that the ferry-boat was in need of assistance, Trenchard directed his men to run alongside, and in attempting to gain the deck of the ferry-boat he missed his footing and fell into the swift current of the river, where, in the confusion of the moment, he undoubtedly would have been drowned, had it not been for the prompt assistance given by John Taylor, a seaman who was in



charge of the picket-boat. Taylor, with rare coolness and judgment, gave the necessary orders for extricating his boat from its position, and in a few moments rescued his commander.

Promoted to the rank of captain, July, 1866, Trenchard in 1869-71 commanded the flagship *Lancaster*, of the South Atlantic Squadron. It was while near Montevideo that the officers of a Russian warship gave a dinner to the officers of the *Lancaster*. These Russians had queer ways of expressing their friendship. One of them was to seize the guest of honor and, raising him bodily on their shoulders, carry him three times around the festive board, yelling and shouting all the time sentiments which generally ended in "itski" or "ishtoff." Captain Trenchard, who was by nature inclined to be dignified and ceremonious, was much disturbed by this boisterous exhibition of friendship on the part of his hosts. But there was no help for it, and when they finally placed him on his feet, he brushed himself together as best he could, and made a heroic effort to look pleased.

With the rank of commodore, he served

three years as an Inspector of the Third Lighthouse District, having his headquarters at Staten Island. It was while performing this duty that Trenchard introduced a reform in the lighthouse department, which has been maintained to this day. Previously, lighthouse keepers and their assistants had been accustomed to wearing any kind of clothing they chose. Trenchard's suggestion that they be uniformed was adopted, and now the keepers wear a neat, distinctive dress, which is conducive to good order, and stimulates their pride in the service.

There were 137 lighthouses and light-ships in this district, for which Trenchard was responsible, and he considered it one of the greatest compliments of his life when, at the close of the service, he received a letter of praise from George W. Blunt, Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of Pilots, New York. Blunt had become famous for his persistent growling and fault-finding in all matters pertaining to navigation, and to have him actually say something good about the management of lighthouses was indeed a marvel. His letter, dated New York, October 6, 1875, said in part: "I am desired by the Board and

I do convey to you its good wishes in your sphere of duty, and I thank you in its behalf for the uniform courtesy and promptness with which you acted, while filling the office of Lighthouse Inspector for the district, upon the necessarily troublesome and numerous reports of displaced buoys."

In 1875, August 10th, Trenchard attained the rank of rear-admiral in Uncle Sam's navy, and after serving as chairman of a special board at San Francisco, he was ordered to command a North Atlantic Squadron, having the famous *Hartford* for his flagship. During the exciting political campaign in which the partisans of Hayes and Tilden each claimed to have elected their candidates to the Presidency of the United States, Trenchard was in command of the naval force that was collected at Washington, for the purpose of preserving order. The squadron consisted of the *Hartford*, *Plymouth*, *Ossippee*, *Swatara*, *Alliance*, *Ranger*, *Essex*, *Huron*, *Wyandotte*, *Adams*, the store-ship *New Hampshire*, and the monitors *Passaic*, *Canonicus*, *Catskill*, *Dictator*, *Ajax*, *Saugus*, *Mahopac*, *Manhattan*, *Montauk*, and the *Lehigh*. Fortunately the services of the navy were not required.



While in command of this force, Rear-Admiral Trenchard perfected a naval brigade, which could be landed and made to co-operate with the army or to act independently on shore. Speaking of this brigade, Major-General Barry wrote to Trenchard October 30, 1876: "I desire to express to you, and through you to the officers and men of the *Hartford*, *Shawmut*, and *Adams*, my high appreciation of, and hearty thanks for, the compliment of the review ashore which they so handsomely paid me this afternoon. The opportunity thus afforded me to judge of the discipline and qualifications for shore duty of your command, has served to strengthen the convictions already formed, that such a body of gallant and intelligent officers and men may be relied upon under any and all circumstances."

Trenchard received orders July 26, 1877, to send the *Powhatan* to Washington with all the available seamen and marines of the squadron, some fifteen hundred in all, in view of anticipated riots in that city. The scene in the *Powhatan* was exciting. The blue-jackets were busy getting ready for land work. They knew only one duty, and that was the defence of the Stars and Stripes. They were equipped

with Remington rifles. Trenchard proceeded to Washington, where he met his staff, and for the time being, the Ebbitt House was the headquarters of the North Atlantic station. Fortunately, our gallant tars were not compelled to raise their hand against their own countrymen.

Early in January, 1877, Rear-Admiral Trenchard arrived at Hampton Roads in the *Essex*, and visited Admiral Bantatoff and the sailor princes in the Russian frigate *Svetlana*. On February 7th, a banquet was given in the *Hartford* to the Grand Dukes Alexis and Constantine, and other distinguished Russian visitors.

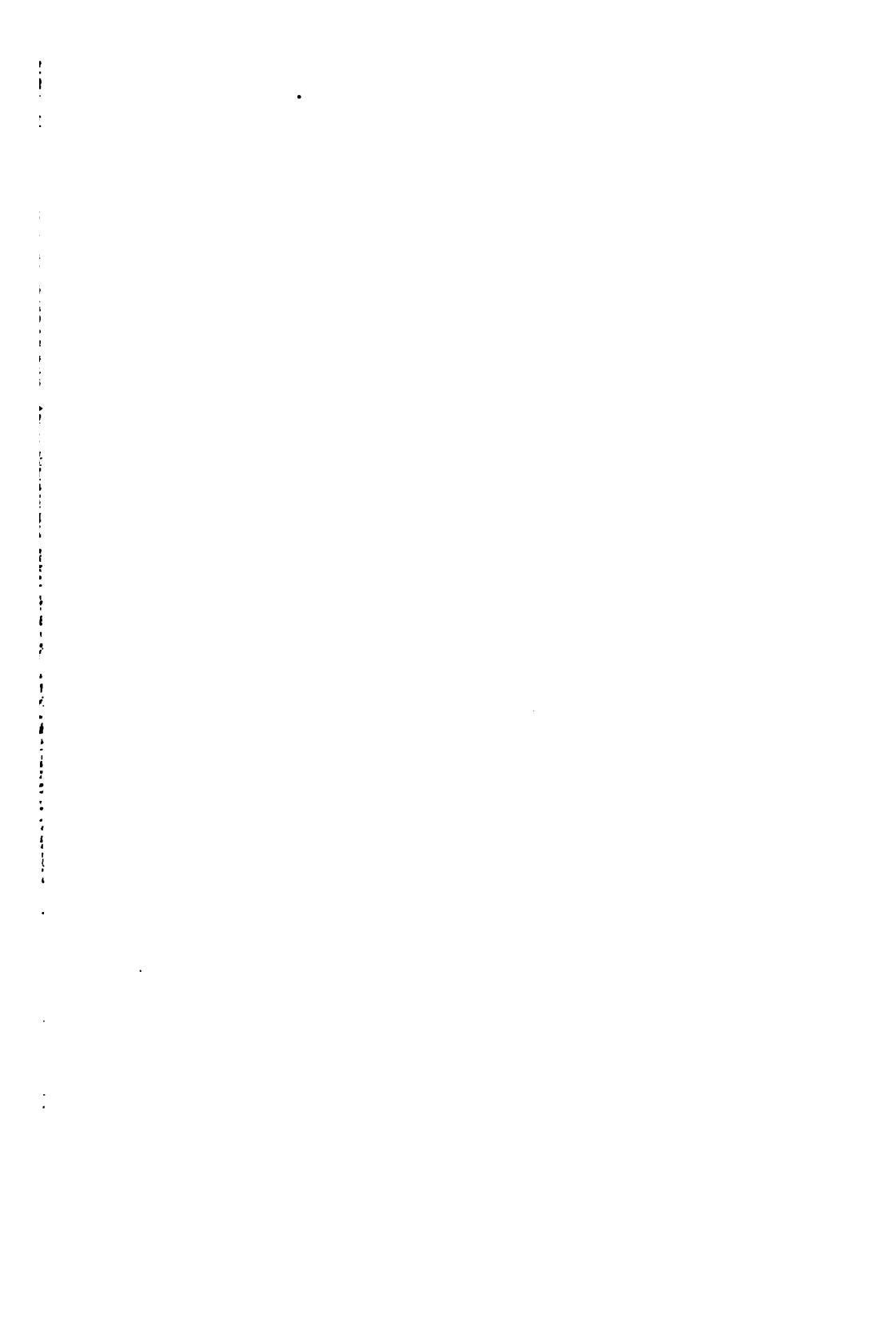
Rear-Admiral Trenchard took a prominent part in the Decoration Day ceremonies of 1878. On June 3d of that year, he received a letter from General H. A. Barnum, the Grand Marshal of the occasion, who said: "On behalf of our Memorial Committee, G. A. R., I hereby tender to you, and through you to the officers of the *Powhatan* and the *Minnesota*, our most grateful thanks for your participation in our Decoration Day parade, to the imposing and unprecedented display of which, even for the metropolis, the presence of your repre-

sentatives of the navy contributed so largely. I but echo the voice of the people and the press when I assure you that the naval battalion contributed the most distinguished and interesting organization in the grand parade."

It was on Decoration Day, 1880, that Rear-Admiral Trenchard attended a dinner given by the Union League Club in New York City, and in response to a toast, gave these prophetic words: "You produce the money, and we will produce the ships." This was in reference to the slander circulated at that time that the United States was unable to build a modern warship.

After serving on a special board in Washington, Admiral Trenchard was retired July 10, 1880, having seen twenty-eight years of sea-service out of a total of forty-five years' honorable connection with the navy. In 1879-80 he was the senior Vice-Commander of the New York Commandery of the Loyal Legion. He died in New York City, November, 1883.







#### NOTES.

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3. Colonel Hipplesly, an English army officer, raised a regiment of cavalry for service in the cause of Venezuelan independence. He wrote an interesting account of his campaigning. Young Hipplesly served in the Venezuelan navy, and subsequently as lieutenant in the Royal Navy.
18. Captain Trenchard's commanding the station entitled the *Cyane* to a complement of musicians. Captain Trenchard having held individual commands was often called commodore, a rank then not official in the navy.
45. Lieutenant Trenchard served in the Mexican War during the closing scenes at Vera Cruz.
101. On the 11th of October, 1859, official information was received that the Japanese commissioners would visit the United States. Immediate steps were taken to prepare accommodations for them, and cabins were built on the *Powhatan's* quarter-deck. At Honolulu, *en route* to San Francisco, a magnificent reception was given by the King and Queen. The Ministers, principal officers of the government, and a number of foreigners were present. Our resident Minister entertained the commissioners the next evening.

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110. The *Rhode Island* had extra hose supplied for the novel purpose of repelling boarders. Her commander stated he intended to attack an enemy head on, he having great confidence in the iron plating.
112. The *Keystone State* was commanded by Lieutenant Woodhull. Trenchard, then executive officer, succeeded him as commander, making three trips with government despatches and ordnance, to and from New York.
158. The officers had gathered on deck in the cabin—a light structure. Trenchard and one or two officers had gone below to place their valuables in tin boxes. A moment later a huge wave washed over the deck, destroying the cabin and sweeping overboard those who had sought refuge there. Three days elapsed before the *Constitution* hove in sight.





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